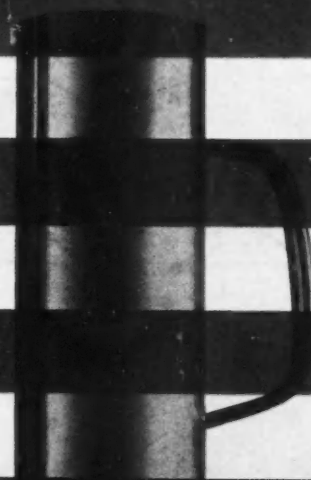
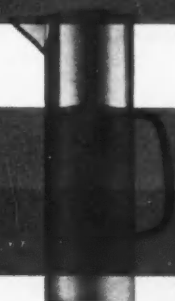


The Council of Industrial Design

February 1959 No 122 Price 3s

Design



No. 20 *Blacksmith*

Jean Tijou was a Huguenot refugee who may have come to England with William of Orange. Little is known of him personally, but it was his example that encouraged English blacksmiths to regard their craft not as a merely functional one but as a rewarding milieu for the decorative artist.



Towards the end of the 17th Century a transformation took place both in the quality of decorative ironwork and the basic approach to the craft. Decoration came more and more to overlay the blacksmith's fundamental construction; welded joints were wreathed in foliage, scrolls were portrayed as sprouting from a luxuriance of vegetation. More than any other, Jean Tijou was responsible for this change in outlook.

His alien exuberance manifested itself in a wealth of flamboyant design whose magnificence is unrivalled in the annals of English ironwork.

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—all carry Tijou's highly individual signature, while reflecting with authority the taste of his day.

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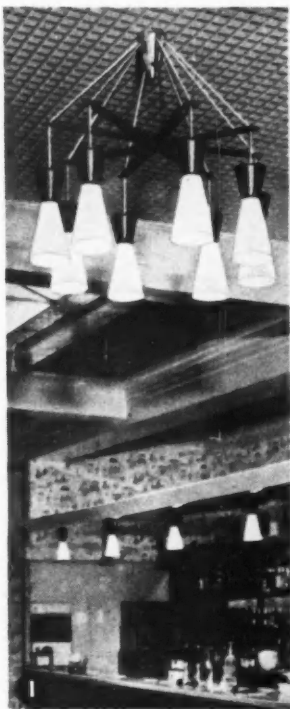
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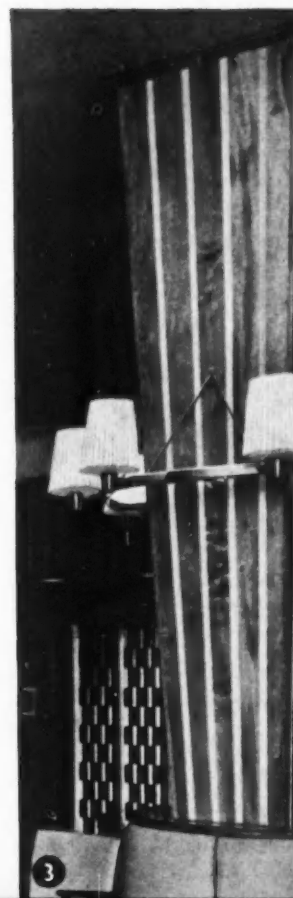
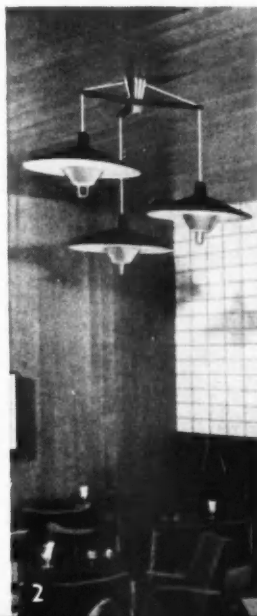
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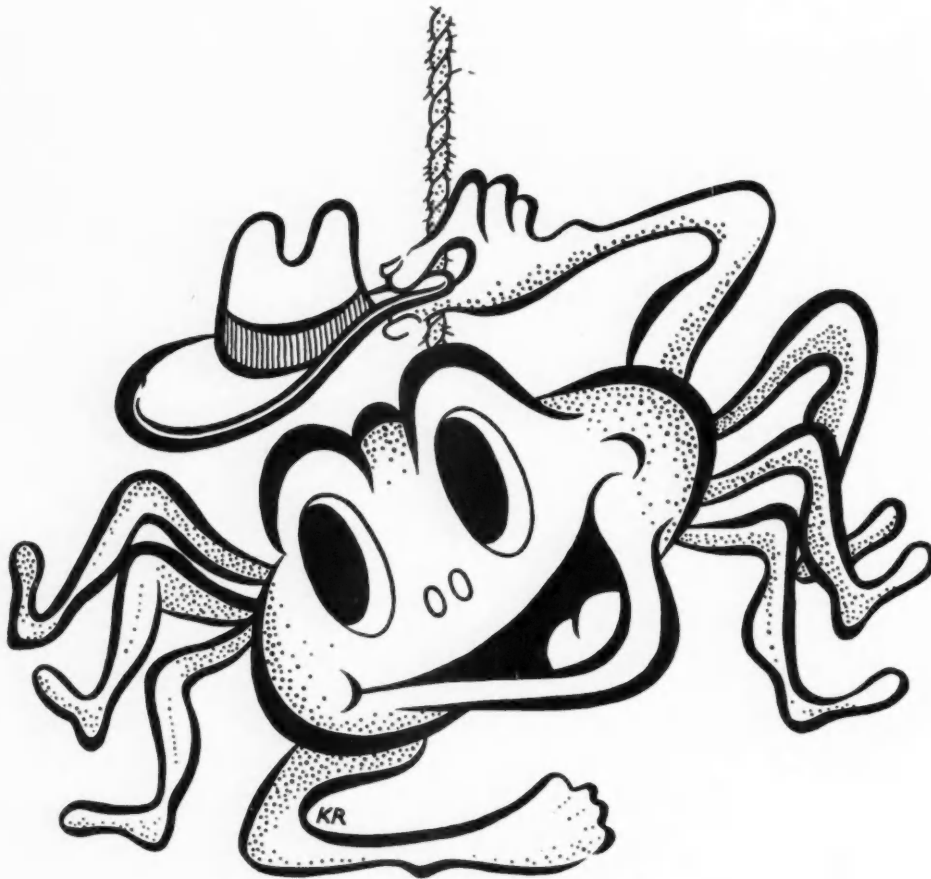
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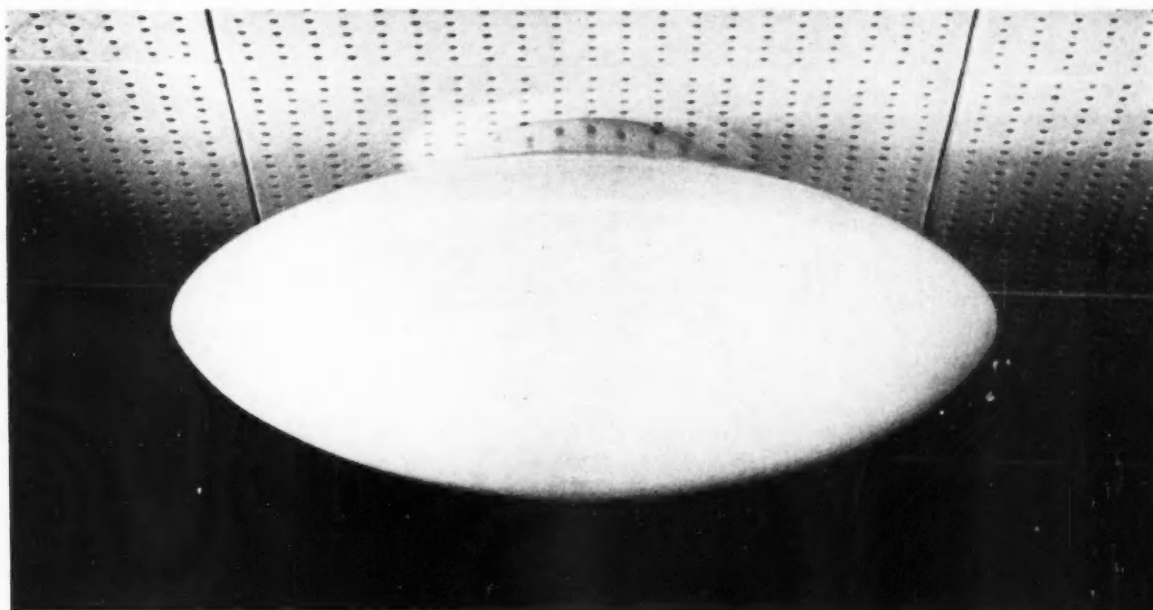
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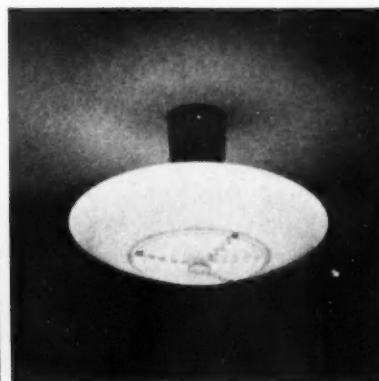
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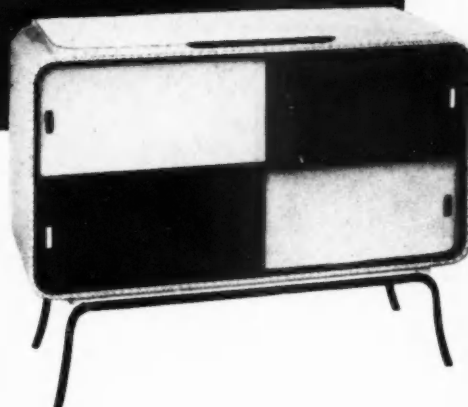
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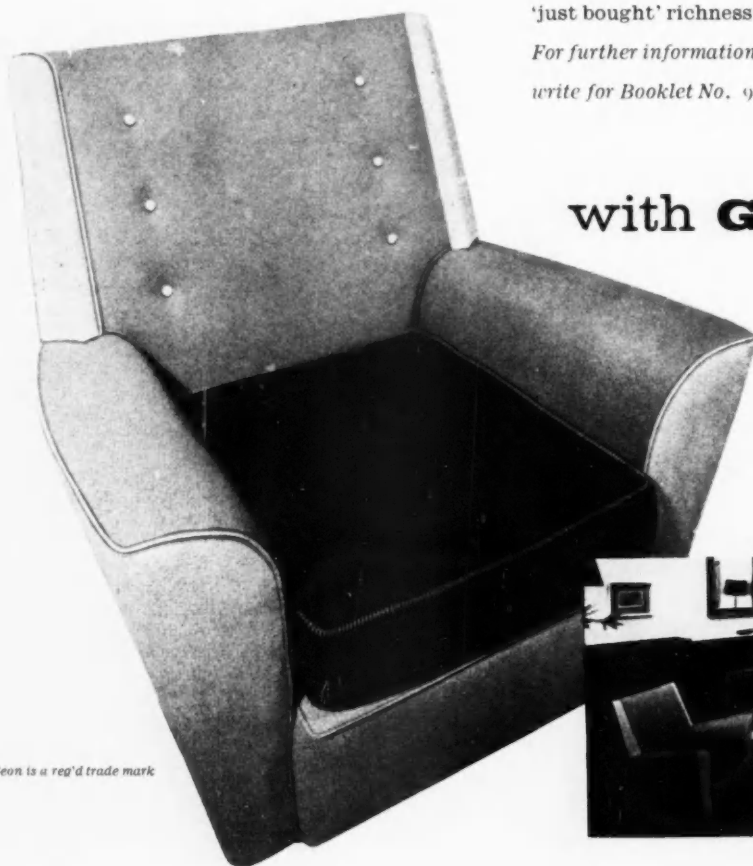
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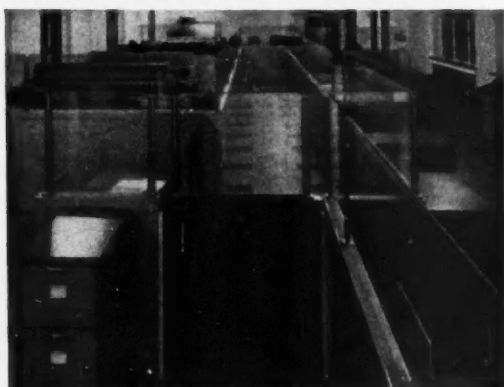
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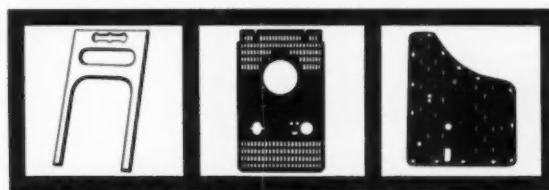
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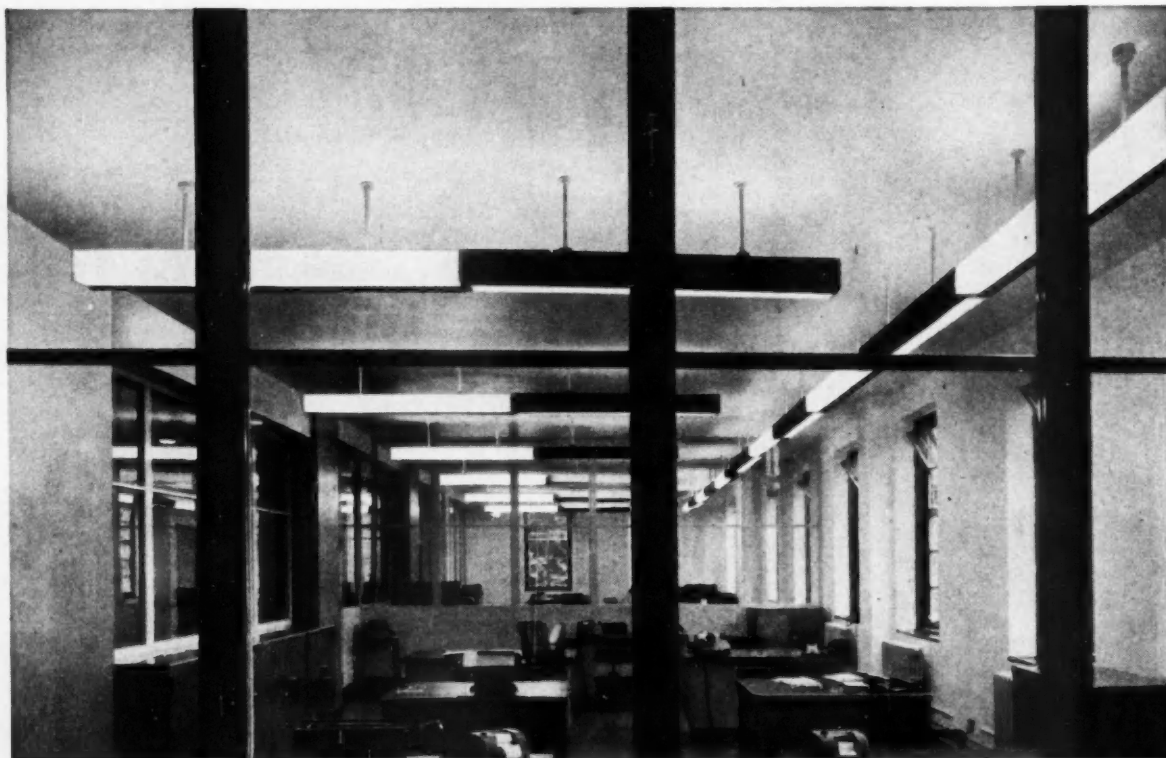
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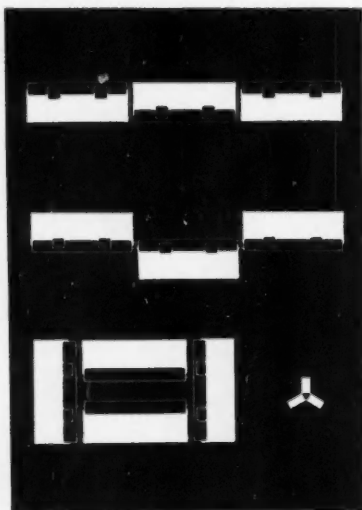
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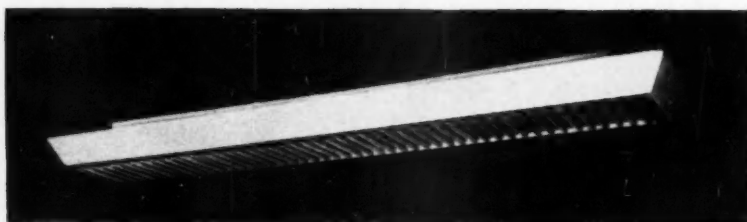


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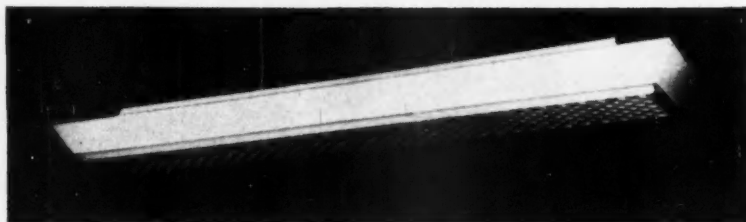
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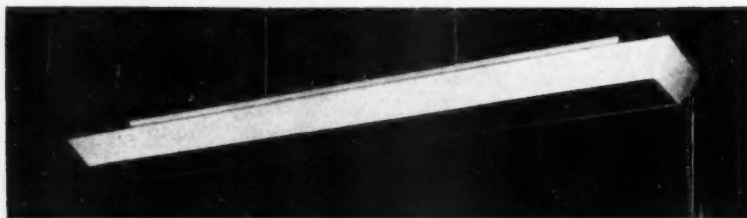
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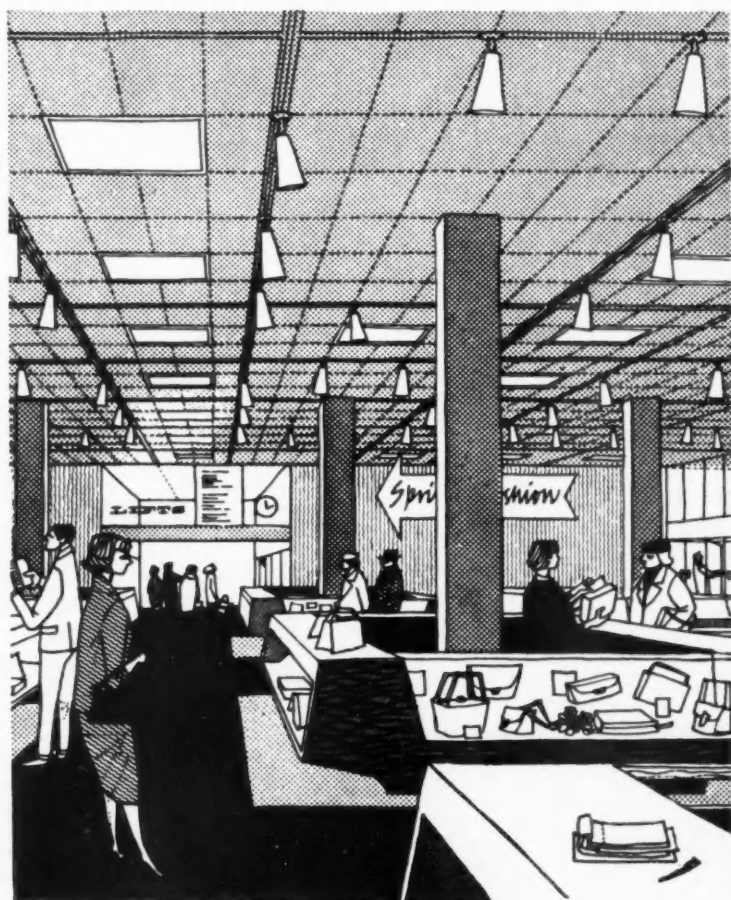
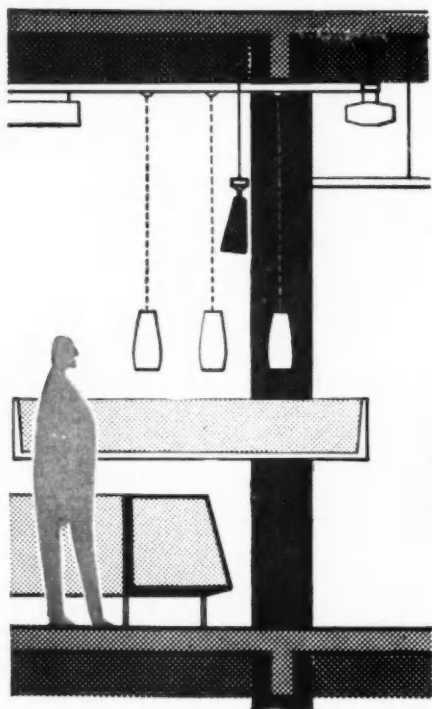


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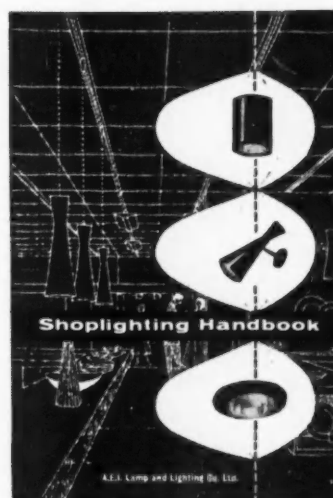
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February 1959

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The graphic designer

A lot of good people are these days quite properly turning themselves into public watch dogs to protect their towns and countrysides from more horrors than have already been inflicted on them. And most of these watch dogs seem to have become almost as lamp-post-minded as their own pets, which is indubitably all to the good. But the closer the watch they keep on their borough engineer, the laxer their guard against the more serious vandalisms of trade and commerce – or so it would appear from visits to many old country towns.

The real monsters are not usually bollards and bus stops, nor lamp-posts and litter bins (where there are any), but shop fronts and facias, hoardings and posters which can more quickly and often more thoroughly wreck a pleasant townscape than can any public service; and yet, like chimney-pots and manhole covers, these things seem to pass unnoticed. Particularly hurtful are the clusters of small slogans, hanging signs and enamelled advertisements that settle on and around every tobacconist's shop like flies on a dung heap, but these too have been with us for so long that they have become accepted as part and parcel of the British scene.

Only when one walks down some famous thoroughfare such as Princes Street, Edinburgh, does one sense a respect, not perhaps for the architecture which is not all that respectable, but for the street, for there, whether by accident or design, even the loudest mouths and most stentorian scribblers seem quietened and controlled. And a second glance confirms the source of this seemliness. It is a general attention to scale and character of lettering.

It has often been said that the shortest cut to improving one's own taste is to study good letter forms. Certainly the shortest cut to good civic manners lies through good public lettering, and from there it should be but another short step to good posters, good advertising, good packaging, good ticketing in shop windows and good printing in everything from hand bills to hoardings. This is another way of saying that the trained graphic designer should be a most sought after, most overworked and, next to the good architect, a most honoured citizen. That he has no such status is a measure of our indifference to our surroundings.

We write this, however sententious and exaggerated it may sound, fully convinced that until the graphic artist is properly and universally consulted there can be little meaning or outcome to all the talk about design, for good lettering and good layout are the starting point of all good design policies. Perhaps in the past this magazine has not devoted enough space to this most fundamental and ubiquitous of the minor arts. We shall try to do better in the future and shall look to our graphic artists for their support with contributions, illustrations, comment and controversy.

P.R.

Pointers

Designing for gravy and politics

If you saw newspaper reports of the *National Management Conference* held recently at Brighton, you will have assumed that nobody mentioned that difficult word, 'design'. But in fact it was mentioned several times, and one journalist from a top paper even told me how much he had enjoyed hearing how good design could help our overseas sales. What, I asked him, was he going to write about it. He looked a little startled and said surely I knew that *the* story of the day was the one about Tommy Steele. He was talking about Mark Abrams's paper on *The New Consumer* – in other words, the teenager.

I wasn't surprised that he found more to get to grips with here than in B. H. Dyson's paper on *Selling Abroad*. Mr Dyson's paper was really a series of back-handers at the way Britain handles her exports (he climbed down a lot at question time) and confused reports on the value of styling and design. It was a pity that the only major paper read at the conference which included quite a lot about design should be so muddled. Mr Dyson put up a very good show, waving an occasional gravy boat in front of his audience to show how badly it was designed; quoting the case of the electric sweeper which wouldn't sell in an unspecified country because it was enamelled in the colours of the opposition party, and quoting DESIGN on the horrors of the 'Continental' design for radios. But he was bursting with the wrong sort of slogans. "We must be a *fashion* leader", he said. "We must abandon the phrase, 'Designing for production', and adopt the new ones: 'Styling for customer appeal', 'Designing for world markets' and 'Detailing for productivity'." He had some useful things to say, and to illustrate, about detailing for cheaper and quicker production, but his constant references to styling and fashion were alarming.

Brighton – rock generation

The talk that 'sold' the Brighton conference to the popular Press – the one about the teenagers – did not have any direct references to the design of consumer goods. The 'new consumer' in Mark Abrams's title is spending £5 a week (£3 a week if a girl), compared with a few shillings a week before the war. But this money is going mainly on recreational goods – or, as Dr Abrams put it rather neatly, on goods 'which are highly charged emotionally'. It's just as well, when you remember some of the over-emotional bicycles and record players in the shops, that the new consumers are not consuming household goods. What happens when they do? Dr Abrams says that the teenage girl is very

much influenced by mum. I don't think there is much of a Message here for any of us, except for the manufacturer who knows that he is already pleasing mum. And of course, any firm that liked to adopt Tommy Steele would be on to a good thing. The conference heard how this young man was constantly expected to do clean, healthy and influential things. Perhaps he could be persuaded to say a word or two about good design in the home.

Stout arguments

Design in the home was one of the marginal subjects discussed at the *Management Conference*. It was discussed by the wives – behind the retreating backs of national Press men – and by Stephen Garrett, whose theme was 'Design your home the way you want it; make it a background for living, not a copy of a glossy magazine page.' This was more or less the theme of Sir Kenneth Clark's admirable ITV broadcast, called *What is Good Taste?* I haven't seen a design subject put over better than this on television. It was particularly astute of Sir Kenneth to begin his programme by screening a room that most design-conscious people would welcome as a bit of good contemporary, and to condemn it as bad taste. It was a familiar room to those of us who have to look at too many magazines – all white and light, airy and spindly, simple and insipid. It was the sort of room, said Sir Kenneth, where you couldn't possibly open a bottle of stout. And then he showed us a room where you certainly could open a bottle – an ever-so-cosy den, riddled with meaningless ornaments, 'cheerful' colours and clumsy furniture. With disarming charm he said that many people he liked lived in rooms like this, but . . .

But what? However cosy, bad taste was not as good as good taste. And good taste was not something you acquired by good birth or even by having an appreciation of art. It was something intensely personal, and something that *could* be improved, as the government of the day realised when it set up the CoID. It was not, Sir Kenneth added, something that could be dictated to you. And then, just as his audience was hoping to see a room that *he* thought was good taste, he wisely disappeared, after a neat joke against his own taste.

This was first class television, because Sir Kenneth Clark is a first class television personality. But was it only television for the converted? I think it was. Only the converted would have enjoyed the extraordinary contrast between the collection of modern pottery and a medieval pot, which seemed to come alive in comparison.

You'll wonder where the yellow went

A final word about television. Look out for a new magazine programme which Granada is producing. This enterprising group has decided to put over new products – particularly furniture – in a way that will appeal to the intelligent viewer. This is a pretty daring thing to do in the face of an audience conditioned by imbecile jingles. But those of us who are not insulted by not having our intelligence insulted will find it a pleasant change.

KENNETH J. ROBINSON

Stereo is here to stay, but the problem of incorporating the equipment into the average living room of the average household remains. This article outlines manufacturers' various approaches, and suggests that the visual design of the equipment is far from satisfactory. An exhibition in The Design Centre from February 16 – March 14 shows one solution.

STEREO

STEREO

STEREO

Stereophonic sound is the greatest single development in sound reproduction since the introduction of the LP record, and it is naturally arousing a great deal of interest. Put most simply, stereo records through 2 microphones, and reproduces the 2 sound tracks so obtained on 2 loudspeakers. It thus approximates more closely to normal hearing, and achieves a far greater reality of sound in space than conventional recording. What is more, stereo can obtain this more natural sound with comparatively simple equipment, so that a reasonably good commercial stereo system could cost less than what is very loosely described as Hi-Fi equipment, of comparable quality (DESIGN September 1957 pages 24–30). Nevertheless, with stereo, the quality of the sound depends just as much on the equipment as it does in monaural Hi-Fi. A complete stereo outfit can be bought for as little as £40, but a Hi-Fi stereo outfit could cost anything from £100 upwards.

The 2 speakers in a stereo system must be a certain minimum distance apart, usually at least 5–6 ft. Stereo sound then results in only a certain area, shown roughly in the diagram on page 28. While the exact outline of the stereo area depends on the system and on the acoustics of the room, this general pattern will apply under all practical conditions. It is therefore a problem to accommodate a family, a stereo system (and probably also a TV receiver) in a living room so that all its members can hear stereo, watch TV, and not get too far away from the fire – assumed to be in a traditional position. The solution demands ingenuity on the part of the designers of the equipment, and of the householder himself.

Several of the systems now on the market are technically excellent, and represent good value; unfortunately only a few of them achieve satisfactory visual design in the main cabinet and speakers. Most manufacturers house what is essentially a scientific listening system in glossy wooden cabinets with splayed legs and gimmick decoration, or in reproduction cabinets. Very few have solved the problem of humanising the equipment so that it can be absorbed into an ordinary room. Nor has any manufacturer attempted what the Italians can do with so much success – emphasising rather than

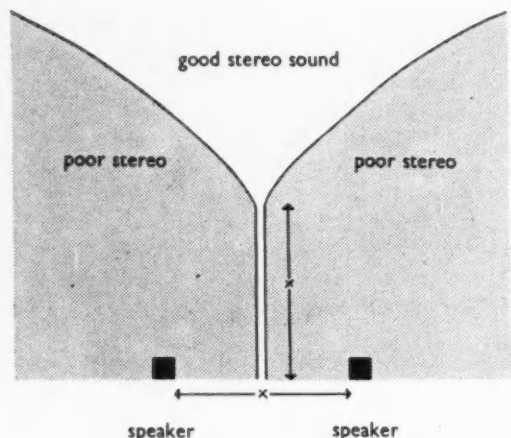
STEREO

concealing the technical quality of the equipment, and yet producing a design which is acceptable in the living room.

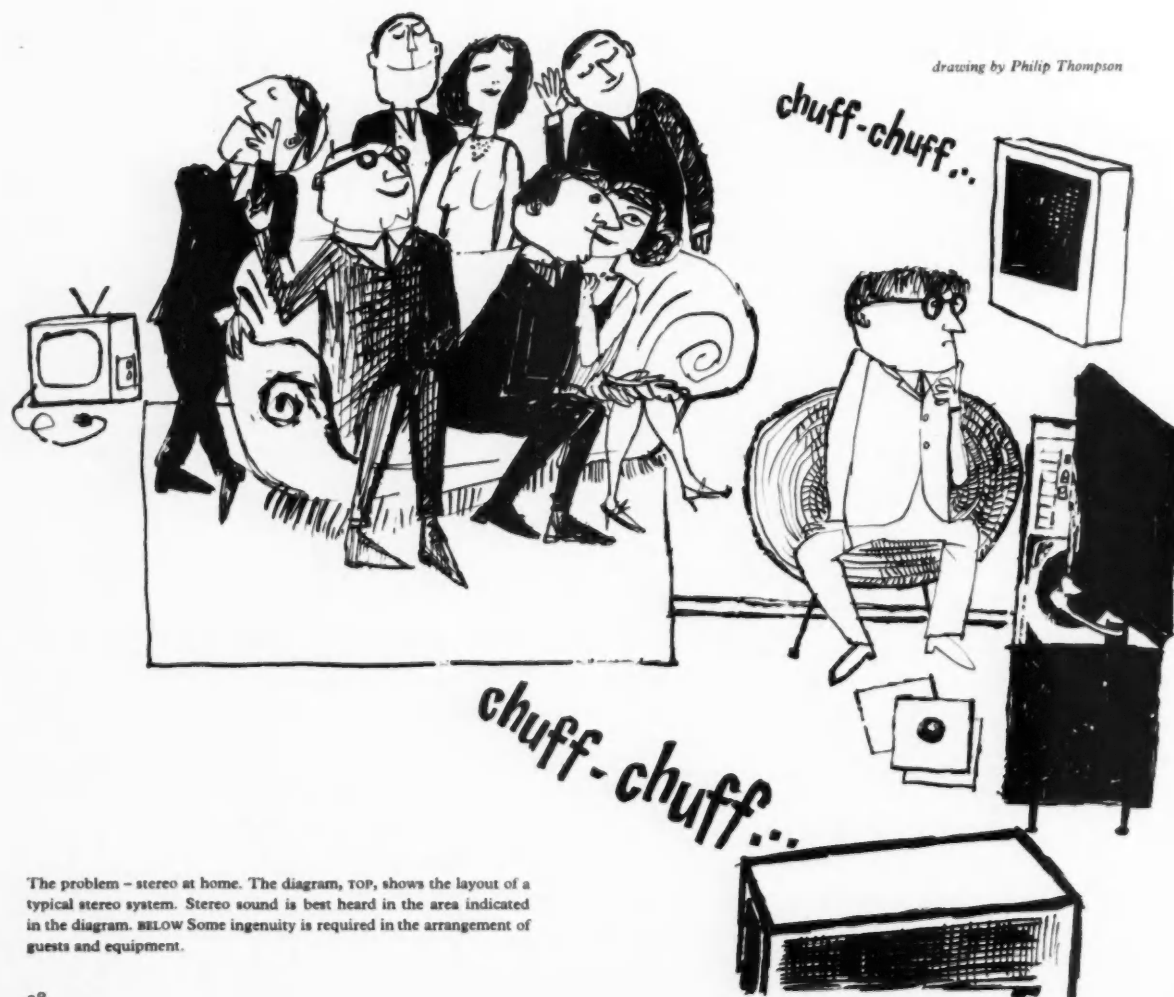
Stereo systems now on the market use 1 of 3 basic design solutions :

1 A console housing the turntable, amplifiers, etc, with the 2 loudspeakers in some way hinged to it, so that they can be pulled out when in use. This can be a neat arrangement when the equipment is not being used, but it can have a rather untidy 'Heath Robinson' look when the speakers are extended. With this solution, the separation between the speakers is probably on the small side, and there must be enough wall space left free in the room to allow for the speakers to be pulled out.

2 A system consisting of 3 units, where there is 1 main cabinet housing the turntable, amplifiers and controls, with 2 separate speakers. In some systems both the main unit and the 2 speakers are consoles, designed so that they can stand next to each other and make, visually, a single piece of equipment. This can be most satisfying, but it involves shifting speakers before and after playing, and one must allow wall and floor space for the speakers in both positions, and preferably between them, too. In other systems, the speakers are small and intended for permanent fixing, either at floor level or wall-mounted. Although a large speaker gives better reproduction than a small one of equal quality, a well made small speaker can now be very efficient indeed.



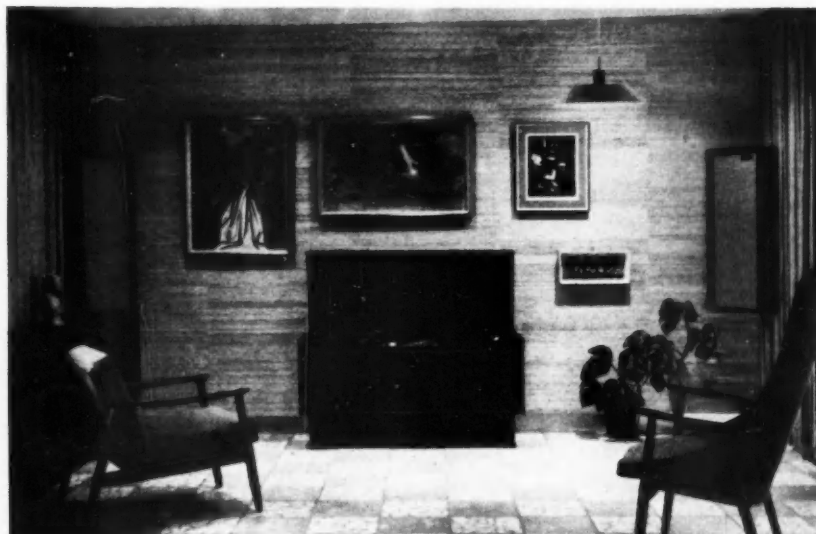
drawing by Philip Thompson



The problem - stereo at home. The diagram, TOP, shows the layout of a typical stereo system. Stereo sound is best heard in the area indicated in the diagram. BELOW Some ingenuity is required in the arrangement of guests and equipment.

The humanistic and the technological approach to the design of stereo equipment. LEFT The cabinet (HFU/10) is available in dark or light sapele mahogany veneer. The speakers are finished in sapele mahogany or walnut. MAKERS (cabinet, without equipment) Alfred Imhof Ltd. £39 18s; (speakers) Tannoy Products Ltd. £49 15s each. Approximate cost of

complete equipment £455. RIGHT, The Audio Q-Flex, a speaker designed for use with stereo or Hi-Fi, represents 1 manufacturer's attempt to use new materials and to break away from the traditional approach. The case is in bonded fibre and the reflector has a bronze finish. MAKER C.Q. Audio Ltd. £14 15s. (Total height 35 inches.)



3 A system similar to that described above, except that there are only 2 units: the main cabinet housing 1 of the speakers, and a second speaker. Here again, the second speaker can be left permanently in its playing position, or it can stand next to the main unit until it is needed.

In addition to those 3 methods, there are a number of portable designs, giving remarkably good results in relation to their price. In some of this type of equipment the second speaker is incorporated in the same case for carrying. One make has 2 identical speakers, carried under the lid of the player. The visual design of many of these portables could be improved, but of course they require no permanent place in the sitting room.

Stereotype living

The choice between the 3 basic methods must depend on the individual user and on his home. For large rooms, and for people who listen for long periods at a stretch – say, for a whole evening – there is much to be said for 2 or 3 floor-standing units. But for the smallish and medium-sized room, and the person who only listens to 1 or 2 records at a time, wall speakers are probably preferable. Although some householders are bound to object to 2 permanent fixtures on the wall, wall-mounted speakers are in many cases the most practical solution. They are always ready for use without preparation, and take up the minimum of floor and wall space. With wall speakers, it is often the best plan to have them fitted into the wall, leaving them flush in front. (Expert advice is, however, advisable to prevent the performance of a speaker being impaired.)

For stereo to be installed with comfort, a room should not be less than 12 ft long. But as the majority of rooms are over this minimum, stereo can be fitted in most homes. The householder himself will have to decide on the best arrangement for his stereo. The manufacturer can help him by making the equipment as versatile as possible, by providing a range of flush wall and corner speakers, and by devoting as much attention to visual design as has obviously gone into technical design.

Showroom solutions

GEOFFREY SALMON

Successful marketing depends on good presentation of both the firm and its product, whether by advertising or display. To display the product is usually simple enough. To display the organisation behind the product and to give an impression of quality, scope and efficiency in 3 dimensional terms poses a more sophisticated problem.

Three organisations which have recently opened new display offices in the West End, though differing in size, have adopted a realistic approach towards this particular aspect of public relations.



The Rotaflex showroom designed by John and Sylvia Reid. The spiral staircase leads to the managing director's office. The wall and ceiling panels can be easily removed and new ones refixed, complete with lighting fittings, in a matter of minutes.



Open planning at W. H. Smith's offices, designed by THM Partners, allows typing pool and reception area to share the same space. A screen of panels, designed by R. J. Smith and made by Plyglass Ltd (DESIGN October 1957 pages 40-1), forms a background for the receptionist and provides visual relief to the monotony of office uniformity.

Rotaflex (Great Britain) Ltd shows its wide range of lighting fittings in a street level display in Conduit Street, W1, with an ingenious design by John and Sylvia Reid. The man in the street is lured into the showroom by the glimpse of a plethora of Rotaflex light fittings cascading down a narrow width display area towards a larger area surmounted by an elegant plaster dome. Visually this is most exciting and an immediate impression is made because the products themselves have been allowed to speak. Their setting is simple - full height plain white panel walls, wide lino contrasting strips across the floor and a simple hard-board-faced acoustic ceiling. Both wall and ceiling panels can be easily removed and new panels complete with fittings refixed and plugged into the electrical system within minutes. Within the dome large multi-

light fittings are displayed free from clutter and beneath is open carpeting. This generosity of conception suggests exclusiveness and intelligent selection, a comprehensive presentation of both product and organisation.

W. H. Smith & Son Ltd's purpose in converting a third floor warehouse area in Portugal Street, WC2, was to display goods to the firm's own retail buyers who visit it regularly from all over the country. Designed by THM Partners, the marketing area was developed as an open office plan on the American pattern, where reception, executives, display, marketing clerks and typing pool surround a main display space, and are separated only by screens or variations in surface treatment.

This has produced an effect of spaciousness, and the co-ordinated design of desks, tables and display stands

conveys an air of business competence. Monotony has been avoided by defining specific areas with different textures, materials and lighting. The ceiling over the display space consists of an 'egg-crate' built up of acoustically treated plaster units with lighting above – a combination which eliminates glare and controls noise. Elsewhere the ceiling is flat with alternating lines of acoustic tiles and lighting strips. Screening throughout is simple, light and elegant, of acid etched glass and rosewood panels trimmed with brass. Flooring of rubber and carpet deadens sound. Almost the only colour lies in natural materials, furnishing fabrics, and in the screen in the reception area. Here a multi-coloured light-diffusing screen of Plyglass offers a lively introduction to a modern organisation and its merchandise.

Olivetti (Great Britain) Ltd occupies 3 floors in a new building in Berkeley Square, which forms its head office, with interiors designed jointly by Design Research Unit and John Diamond. The 2 upper floors accommodate accounts, sales and personnel departments, while the first floor is devoted to an entrance suite containing the managing director's office, a reception hall, and combined meeting and display room. Visitors to this latter normally consist of invited groups of the public who, while not directly concerned in buying, are interested in the British Olivetti organi-

sation and its products. No showroom atmosphere is attempted – painted plaster surfaces alternate with room height cedar veneered doors and panelling; thick carpet or cork and unpatterned acoustic tiled ceiling, and subdued warm colours; the machines stand on metal tables and wall brackets. Presentation of an Italian organisation, world famous for its high design standards, is sober and dignified.

What are the visual lessons of these 3 widely differing forms of presentation? First, they show how important it is to design the display atmosphere for a specific purpose, knowing exactly what the purpose is. Next, that over-elaboration of background, or the provision of a background for products which are in themselves of great beauty or interest, is not always necessary. Finally, that the size of space available need not inhibit or over-awe the display, provided that space is exploited by screening or arranging distant view points. Rotaflex and British Olivetti provide first class solutions to 2 familiar problems of public relations – one of the showroom and the other of the public relations salon. The particular problem of Smith's, however, has brought about an unusual and exciting solution, one which suggests a wide field of application, where some broader presentation of both a firm and its merchandise to the public might be possible than is at present the case.

The British Olivetti combined meeting and display room designed by Misha Black of DRU, and John Diamond. The centre table can be used as display units for typewriters or readjusted for meetings. Indirect lighting from above a narrow cedar sounding board gives illumination free from glare.



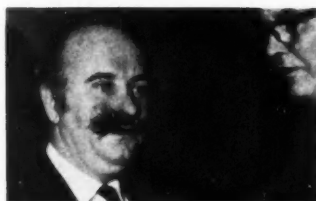


F. H. K. Henrion

Room for consultants



Frank Austin



Hulme Chadwick



Gaby Schreiber

John Barnes



Recently the General Consultant Designers Group of the SIA held an exhibition for the Press in The Design Centre to show the methods and range of the general consultant's work. The SIA group consists of John Barnes, J. Beresford-Evans, Misha Black, Hulme Chadwick (the designer of the exhibition), Robin Day, James Gardner, Milner Gray, Robert Gutmann, Kenneth Holmes, Jack Howe, W. M. de Majo, Jack Procter, John Reid, Gaby Schreiber, Neville Ward and Frank Austin, with F. H. K. Henrion as chairman and S. P. Jordon as secretary; of these 18, 16 were represented in the exhibition.

The group was formed from meetings which took place a few years ago, when 25-30 members of the SIA met to draw up conditions of entry, aims and so on. After 3 years of discussion the conditions were drafted but only 12 of the original number became members of the group. Briefly the aims of the group are to facilitate exchanges of information and to formulate codes of practice, conditions of contract and payment. Its members must be in private practice or a partner or principal member of an independent design group. To qualify as general consultants they must give evidence of versatility by producing work in widely different fields. For instance, 20 designs, with a maximum of 12 from any 1 of the following sections: graphic design, constructional design, product design, product design (mechanical) and miscellaneous, and 4 from any 1 category within those sections must be submitted. All designs must have been commissioned, purchased or contracted, and not less than 15 produced and marketed.

The position of the general consultant designer is a comparatively new one in this country, although it has been established in America with organisations such as Loewy's, Dreyfuss' and Chapman's for some years now. Under the very different conditions that exist over here there has been a tendency to view the general consultant as a kind of design department 'trouble shooter', flitting from one industry to the next.

On the other hand it is this wide range of connections throughout industry and the consequent experience it carries, particularly of management, that makes him a valuable complement to the staff designer.

DESIGN ANALYSIS 12

Washing machine

MAKER AEI-Hotpoint Ltd. £69 6s

The number of washing machines in Britain "has increased from 2 per cent of households in 1947 to 23 per cent in 1957" stated J. I. Bernard, director and secretary of the British Electrical Development Association, at a recent conference. Since then a variety of new machines has come on the market so that the percentage during the next few years is likely to grow even more. One new machine, the Hotpoint Countess, is the subject of the twelfth article in this series. The manufacturer's comments are on page 38.

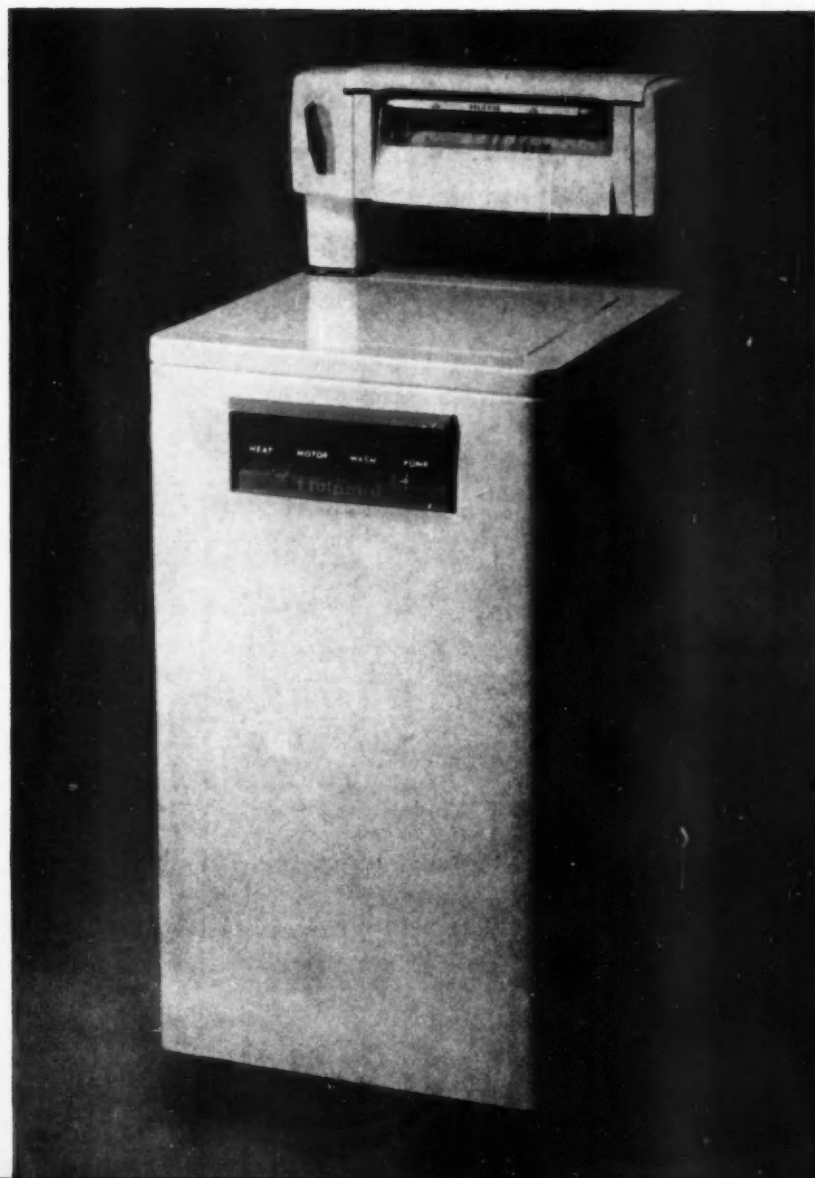
JOHN THIRLWELL
and
DOROTHY MEADE



The authors commended the general appearance of the *Countess* and particularly praised the control panel though not the lettering of the trade name.



Part of the Hotpoint team responsible for the development of the *Countess* washing machine are shown here discussing a prototype model of the power wringer. They are (left to right) J. A. Vears, design manager, home laundry section; K. M. Mackay, manager, product research section; D. H. Graham, director of design; and W. Seaman, chief draughtsman. Some of Mr Seaman's drawing office staff can be seen in the background. The accompanying article describes how the machine was evolved from a prototype based on extensive market research carried out in 1956-7. Several pre-production prototypes and a variety of control devices were made and tried before the final version was put into production last year.



The *Countess*, a medium priced washing machine with a powered wringer and water heater, has been designed to suit the requirements of a particular section of the market. It is relatively simple in conception, neat in appearance, highly efficient as a washing machine, though in some senses not completely successful as a labour-saving device. When assessing its merits and faults it must be remembered that it was introduced to the home market only a few months ago. Since then the manufacturer has been conscientiously engaged in eliminating one or two of its minor teething troubles.

Background to design

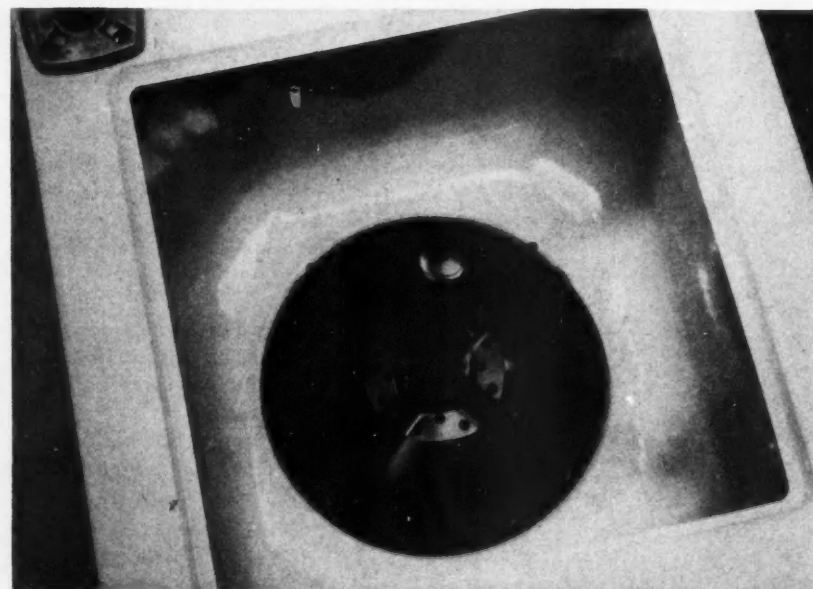
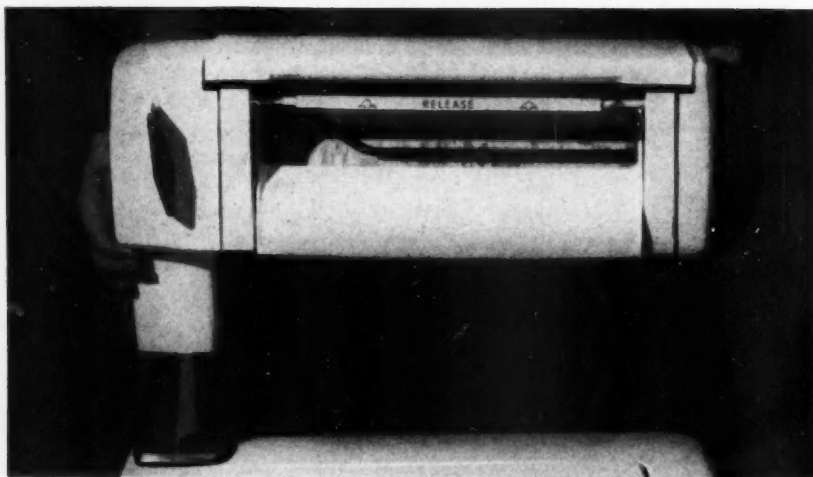
All design work was preceded by intensive market research operations in an attempt to find out what type of machine would be most in demand, the price range and type of market to be aimed at, the type of environment in which the machine would have to fit as well as such details as the position of the wringer, direction of rollers, importance of a reversible wringer, its size and how it should be stored. Hotpoint is in fact one of the few appliance manufacturers in this country to operate its own market research team on this scale. The researches revealed at the time (1956-7) that there was a real demand for a small machine in the £55-£65 range and that at least 40 per cent of buyers would prefer such a machine with a powered wringer. The greatest potential market was in the lower-to-middle income groups.

As a result of this work a prototype machine was produced to meet the research specifications and this was in basic conception similar to the present *Countess*, though very different in appearance.

From this prototype the final machine was developed through several subsequent stages during which a number of protuberances such as handles and external screw heads were eliminated and the present lift-up nylon switches were developed. The compact control panel was in fact evolved from a variety of ideas

● *users' analysis gives high marks for washing efficiency*

TOP The wringer lifts out and can be stored separately if required.
 BOTTOM Some difficulty was experienced in correctly fitting the gyrator – a point which is commented upon by the manufacturer on page 38.



including push buttons and switches in various positions on the front of the cabinet. Two other points were settled at this stage – it was decided to make the wringer the full width of the machine to give it the capacity required to take a full-size double blanket, and to set it prominently on the top so that it would appear an integral part of the machine. No provision has been made for the wringer to be folded within the machine when not in use, though it can be lifted off and stored in a cupboard if the machine is required to stand under a work top.

Construction and appearance

In view of the market at which the *Countess* is aimed it is perhaps surprising that the machine is so restrained in appearance, no attempt being made to glamorise the product with unnecessary applied decoration. Essentially the outside casing consists of a rectangular sheet steel box stove enamelled white or cream. Attention is immediately focused on the control panel. This consists of a carefully detailed grey plastics frame surrounding the group of 4 brilliant red nylon switches each clearly marked with white lettering. It is commendable that this lettering, although small, dominates the Hotpoint trade name immediately beneath, which in itself, though by no means perfect, has been refined from the crude nameplate of earlier models. Great care has clearly been given to the design of the control panel which is one of the neatest solutions that has so far been designed on equipment of this nature.

As has already been stated, the wringer, made of die castings and metal pressings has been designed to fit in with the general appearance of the machine, as in many kitchens it will remain in its operating position even when the machine is not being used. It has thus been designed to reflect the rectangular character of the main casing and is particularly well contrived at the junction between the main body of the wringer and the supporting column which tapers slightly towards the mounting plate. The curvature on the front and side elevations of the wringer is so slight that it is virtually equivalent to an entasis, which is admirable in its own right but has a tendency to make the straight sides of the main casing appear to have a slight negative curvature.

The wringer has a safety release which is unique in its link mechanism and it opens the rollers at both ends. It incorporates one plain blue and one mottled roller so that it is always clearly apparent when the wringer is in motion. The least satisfactory element of the wringer is the control switch. It does not fit the hand, nor does it relate visually to the other elements of the wringer; there is no indication which way it has to be turned, and on the model tested it was set at a noticeable angle from its (presumably intended) vertical position when switched off. But in spite of this the refinements of the wringer and the control panel contribute more than anything else to the appearance of high quality which is an important characteristic of this machine.

The wash tub is similar to that used in the Hotpoint *Princess*, as experience has shown this to be a good

shape for the free movement of the clothes during washing. It is vitreous enamelled a pleasant blue which contrasted well with the white exterior of the model tested. The gyrator is of moulded plastics and rotates backwards and forwards through 214° at 51 movements per minute. It is gentler in action than the impeller washers but nevertheless moves the clothes about to a considerable extent. The capacity of the tub is 9 gall and is intended to take 4-6 lb of dry clothes. The machine incorporates a 2 kW heater which is intended primarily to boost hot water from the tap, rather than to heat the water from cold.

The construction throughout is of a high standard, particular attention being given to rust protection and electrical insulation.

Use in the home

For the purpose of this article the *Countess* was tested daily over a period of 6 weeks, being required to do all the washing for a family of 4. The household normally worked a fully automatic machine of much larger capacity and was therefore mildly prejudiced at the start against the smaller non-automatic *Countess*. Yet at the end of the testing period the greater adaptability of the *Countess* won for it almost unqualified approval.

Considered purely as a washer there were few complaints. It was possible to overload the machine and still get satisfactory results. It was generally found that washing took longer than the specified times if really good results were wanted, but top access to the tub made it easy to see when the clothes were clean. The maker's claim that the machine does not tangle clothes is valid provided the instructions are followed and pyjama legs and shirt arms are tied before washing. Sheets and nappies washed in the *Countess* were whiter than they had ever been in the larger automatic machine. But the maker's suggestion that one filling of water could wash several loads was found to be impracticable.

The heater was slow if starting from cold (up to 3 hours to boil a full tub) but was adequate when starting with hot water from the tap (about 1 hour). A thermometer, either incorporated in the machine or as an optional extra, would have been helpful. Cleaning round the heater element when the machine is empty was found to be difficult - a hinged element like radiant rings on some electric cookers would be a great improvement.

Rinsing is a problem that does not seem to have been sufficiently considered. No mention is made of this in the instruction book, but presumably the intention is that the clothes should be rinsed in the sink. It is possible to rinse in the machine but it considerably lengthens the total washing time. The problem would be eased if a second hose were provided to allow water to be run in and pumped out simultaneously; an addition that would also be of great benefit in cleaning out the machine after use. The gyrator was found to be light and easy to clean, though difficulty was experienced in fitting it correctly into position. It was only discovered after several washings that it was possible for clothes to become trapped underneath, but this cannot

happen if the gyrator is properly fixed in place.

The wringer in use

The wringer action was found to be really effective, and adjusts automatically to take thin material or the thickest blanket, although small garments tend to get wrapped around the rollers. The automatic release device is cleverly designed and enables a fresh start to be made easily. However, when the release bar is not operated there is some delay before the motor stops automatically if, for example, the clothes bunch up. This delay is long enough to leave some risk of tearing the clothes. When the release bar is operated and the wringer top lifted, a sharp edge (the only one of the machine) is exposed. If this were rounded off any danger of cuts would be eliminated although the appearance of the wringer might suffer in consequence. There was a tendency for minute pieces of the top roller to flake off which may be due to a fault in the material from which it is made. The wringer can be set in any of 4 positions, and this contributes much to the machine's versatility. But it weighs 23 lb, which is lighter than most other powered wringers, though it is still awkward to stow away if the machine is normally kept underneath the draining board.

Handles and instructions

The absence of handles on the *Countess*, while contributing to good appearance and providing an extra working top, has minor disadvantages. The action of the lid, for example, which comes off easily by pressing on one side to tilt it, could be dangerous if the water is boiling, and a cloth is needed to protect the hands from the steam. Similarly the body of the machine gets uncomfortably hot when the water is boiled and should be handled carefully if it is necessary to move the machine during this time. The castors are extremely efficient and allow the *Countess* to be moved in any direction with ease.

Perhaps the most serious criticism that arose during the testing of this appliance concerned not the washing machine itself but the instruction card. This appeared to be written more for publicity reasons than to give information. There is no mention of how to ensure that the gyrator is correctly in position; the washing of blankets is not mentioned, nor is the question of rinsing. The layout is confusing; the washing chart, for example, coming after the lubrication instructions instead of in its logical place after the general instructions on the use of the machine. The importance of thorough and carefully worked out literature of this type should not be underestimated. It was felt that a quick reference card to be kept by the machine should ideally be supplemented by a more detailed booklet with instructions on loading, timing of washes, the treatment of special fabrics and so on.

Conclusions

Evidence from the tests of this new washing machine can leave little doubt that in most respects it performs its task efficiently and has few snags. In a recent survey



The authors of this article - Dorothy Meade, a housewife, and John Thirlwell, an engineer who is also a member of the council of the Consumers' Association Ltd - tested the *Countess* from both the technical and user's viewpoints. They are seen here examining the wringer during one of their tests.

of 6 washing machines from a similar price range the Consumers' Association Ltd highly recommended the *Countess*. Our more subjective analysis of the single machine lends support to the view that many families would find it an extremely good buy. In particular we would commend its effectiveness as a washer, the clarity and neatness of its controls, and the restrained good manners of its overall appearance, especially of the wringer. We would criticise the lack of information on rinsing – a part of the washing process which adds considerably to the stated washing times – and the

instruction card generally. However, the problem of designing to meet specific requirements within a specific price bracket must inevitably result in limitations which prevent the achievement of ideal solutions. The rinsing problem and some of the other minor difficulties mentioned in this article could undoubtedly have been overcome if the price of the machine had been increased. But this would have priced the *Countess* out of the market that the firm's researches indicated would be most profitable. At £69 6s it is already slightly higher than the 2-year old estimate.

The manufacturer comments

The detailed analysis to which our Hotpoint *Countess* has been subjected is of great interest and value to us.

Where criticisms stem from comparison with a fully automatic machine, we are glad that the reviewers have been good enough to point out that the problem of designing to meet a particular price bracket has imposed limitations.

Research

To satisfy ourselves on the rightness of the product we are engaged in a general product assessment with owners of the *Countess* covering all aspects of appearance, design and working. This is on a scale which we believe few appliance manufacturers emulate.

Washing

We are studying the criticisms of the lid although our research indicates that relatively few complain that this is difficult to remove or gets hot. The re-entrant shoulder on the gyrator is now being tapered to make it sit correctly in position.

Rinsing

In addition to other advantages the *Countess* can be stowed away under a draining board of BS height when not in use. Convenience of rinsing is a major asset and it is specifically designed to wring into the sink and to rinse there before swinging the wringer through 90° to wring the rinsed articles on to the draining board. The alternative – as probably experienced in the automatic type with which it has been compared – is to have a separate automatic rinsing action within the machine. This would increase the price and size enormously without offering comparable advantages.

Wringer

The safety mechanism operates at a touch and pro-

vides parallel opening of the rollers. In our view this is the answer to the statement that there is some delay if the rollers jam, with a possible danger to clothes. In the unlikely event of a jam the pressure is swiftly released by knocking the trip bar upwards – there is no urgency to reach for the wringer control or motor switch – thus risk of clothes tearing is negligible.

Heating

The 2 kW element will meet most situations including those found in many smaller houses where additional wiring to take a higher loading might cause problems. Our research shows that a large majority of housewives switch off before the water boils as it is already hot enough. While a hinged element sounds attractive, the hinge would be under water and an electric shock here could be fatal. It necessitates a perfect seal which would be prohibitive in cost.

Instruction card

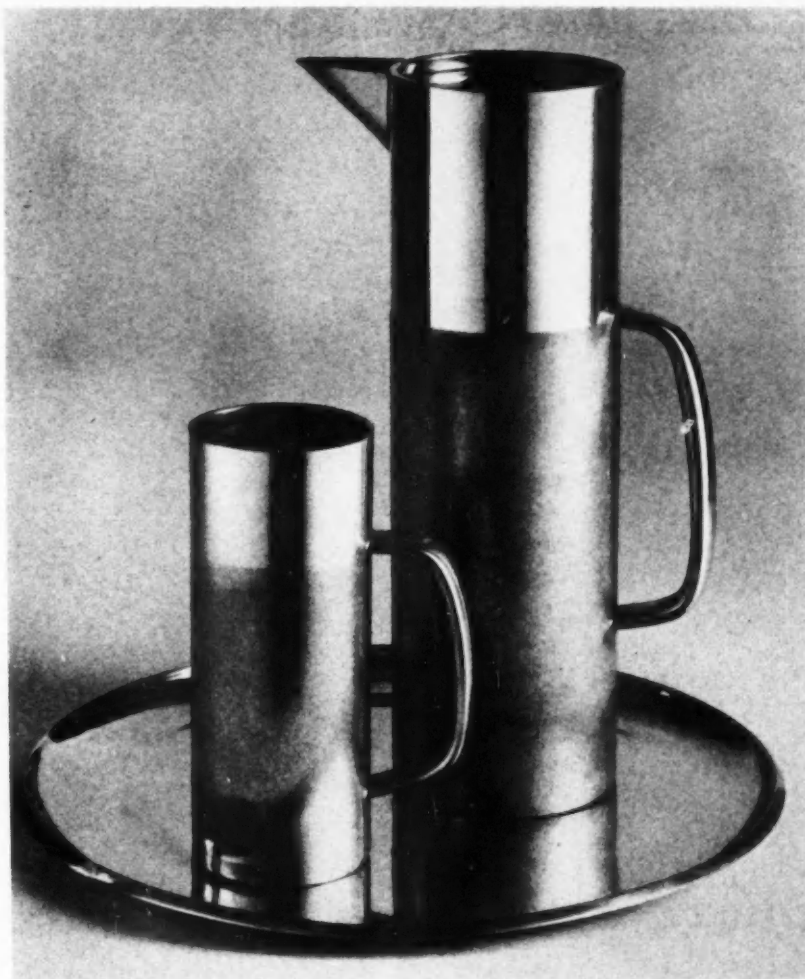
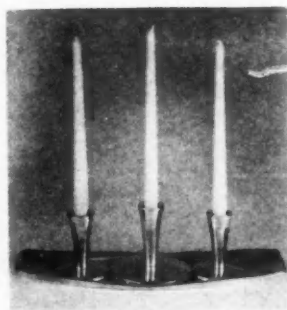
We feel this criticism to be justified and are studying how the instructions can be improved. In addition a detailed booklet is also now supplied with *Countess* washing machines.

Price

The basic purpose in designing the *Countess* was, (a) to provide a Hotpoint machine for a large segment of the market in which we were not already represented, (b) to ensure by research that significant advantages were included which the housewife would find to be of the greatest value, and (c) to market the machine at a competitive price bearing the above points in mind. We have rightly assumed the public is prepared to pay a little over the ceiling fixed 2 or 3 years ago, in order to obtain these obvious advantages, and the enormous success of the *Countess* has proved our predictions to be correct.



Gerald Benney is one of a group of young designers who trained in the silversmithing school at the Royal College of Art. He has carried out a number of important commissions for local authorities and civic bodies such as the maces for Leicester University (DESIGN October 1958 page 34) and London University. This is the first time Mr Benney has designed for pewter, and he is the first industrial designer that Viners Ltd, which he considers the ideal client, has employed.



Traditional methods of manufacture are used in the production of the new range - the candlesticks, LEFT, are spun and stamped, and the trays stamped. £4 12s 6d (3 candlesticks and tray). The decoration which Gerald Benney uses on the martini set, ABOVE, gives pewter a new and interesting texture. £3 7s (jug); £1 7s 3d (tankard); £1 17s 6d (tray).

Material reform

In spite of having built up for itself a solid reputation for the production of traditional designs in flatware and hollow-ware, Viners Ltd, Sheffield, is one of the first British firms to introduce modern designs in pewter. These were commissioned from Gerald Benney after the firm had consulted the CoID's Record of Designers. Viners was employing a consultant designer for the first time, and the directors were looking for someone with a sympathy for the material, and a knowledge of the problems and techniques involved in working it. They decided on Mr Benney after they had seen his work in his own studio.

Pewter was chosen for the experiment because the firm has always had a steady output of designs in this material. However, since the war, pewter has been losing its popularity, and Viners believes that this new

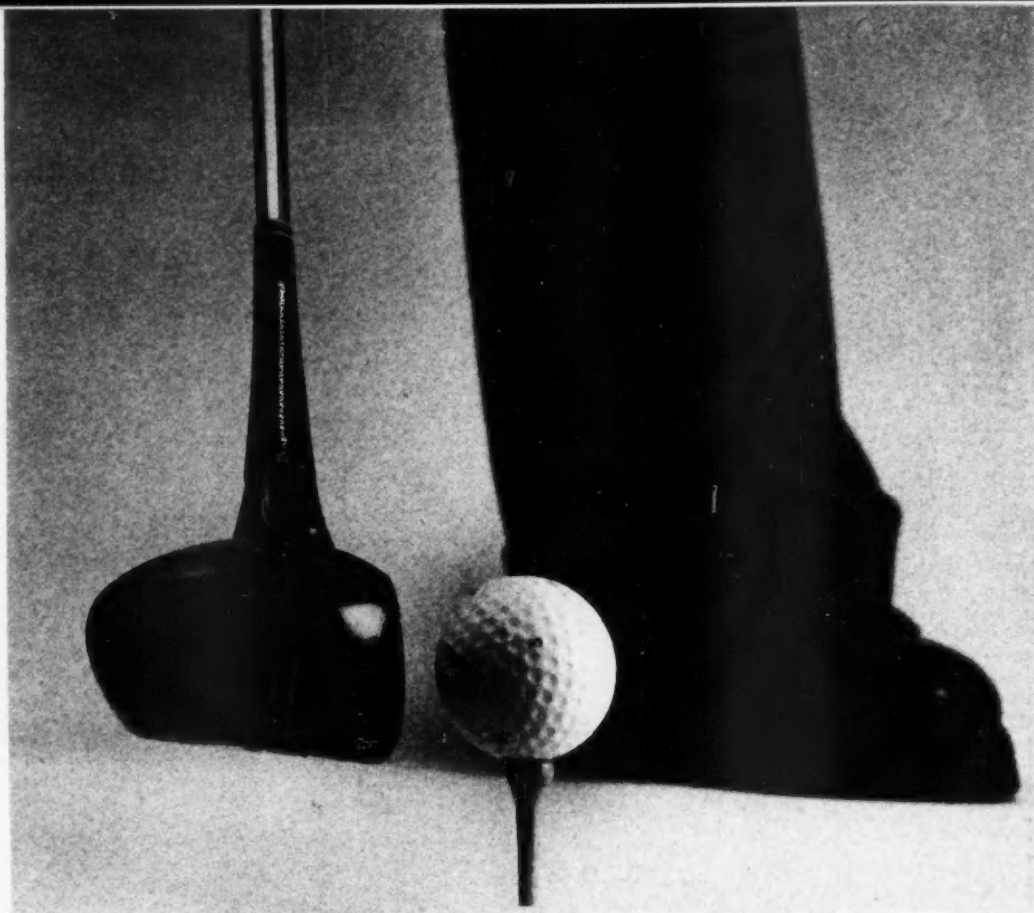
approach may have a revitalising effect. Again, the directors feel that the material is particularly suitable for designs of this type, and it has the added advantage of being less expensive than silver or stainless steel.

The machine and hand techniques which Viners has always employed are used in the production of this new range which includes an ashtray, sauceboat and cigarette box as well as the designs illustrated here. The decoration on the jug and mugs, a new way of using an old technique, is rolled on by a semi-hand process.

Once the firm had seen Mr Benney's prototypes, which were made in his own workshop, he was given a free hand to supervise their production. He has also designed the sales leaflet and the packaging for the new range, and is working on more long term projects for the firm.

G.E.N.

Henry Cotton golf club and new Penfold
American size golf ball. MAKER
George Nicoll (club); Golf Ball
Developments Ltd (ball).



Sporting imprint for Canada

In the series of articles *Automation and design* published in DESIGN in 1957 and 1958 it was suggested that intuitive designing would eventually be replaced by arduous and exact analytical methods which would meet human needs to an extent impossible before the development of automatic data processing machines. It was also suggested in the same series that there are certain products at the moment which take their shapes more from human anatomy than from any outside source and that these products give some idea of future biotechnic forms that might be evolved. Moreover, these biotechnic forms will probably become the dominant source of aesthetic inspiration. This is significant in view of the discussions that have been going on recently in the design world on the possible reconciliation of logical (ergonomic) methods with aesthetic (intuitive) factors.

Among the examples of products whose shape is derived from human anatomy is a rifle; indeed sports goods of various kinds come into the same category.

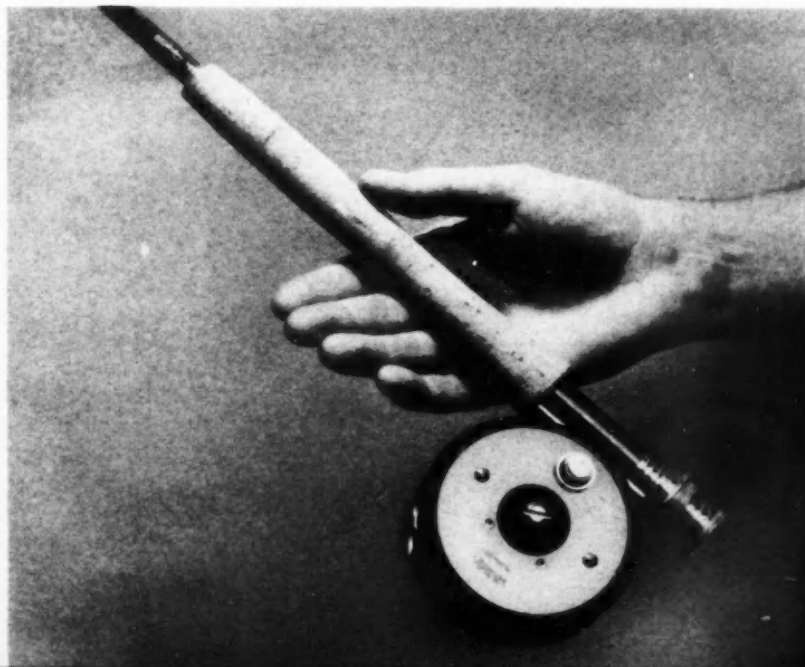
The shapes, for instance, of a saddle, a golf club, or tennis racquet all bear the imprint of the human user to a degree that is rare in other fields. In addition they seem to lack what one could call a direct aesthetic motivation. On the other hand it would be foolish to deny that they have aesthetic quality. How then, can this aesthetic quality be accounted for? When a product is adapted to user requirements to the extent that a rifle is, it automatically establishes a more intimate relation between itself and the user, because it becomes in a sense an extension of the user. The importance of this relation increases as the products' function becomes more critical.

In most sports goods the function is critical but is partly met by, at least, a minimum expertise on the user's part. Once this expertise is gained the player experiences a *rapprochement* between himself and the thing he is using. The 'feel' of club or rifle in the hand, the noise a bat makes when it hits the ball, produce a sensation that could be called an 'aesthetic of use'. It is



Supersport five .22 sporting rifle in steel and walnut, weight 6 lb. MAKER B S A Guns Ltd.

Flexcraft fishing rod in glass fibre with cork handle and Flycraft anodised aluminium reel. MAKER Milwards Fishing Tackle Ltd.

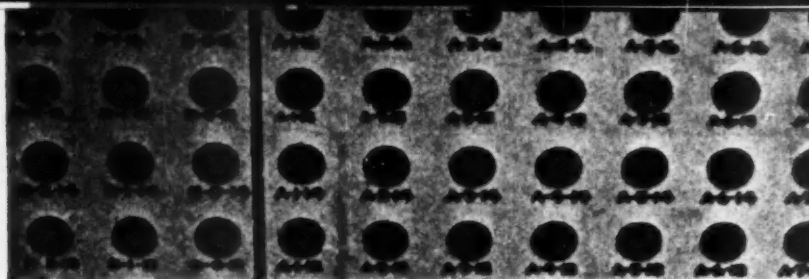


precisely this sensation which is evoked by the shape of the 'implement'; in effect one extrapolates the use – or sensation of use – from the shape.

The faculty of being able to attain a sensation of use, a kind of visual 'feel', is important in other spheres of design as well. Presumably when products are really adapted to human requirements and the expertise of the sportsman is replaced by a close consideration of the varied conditions of use, a similar sensation will exist.

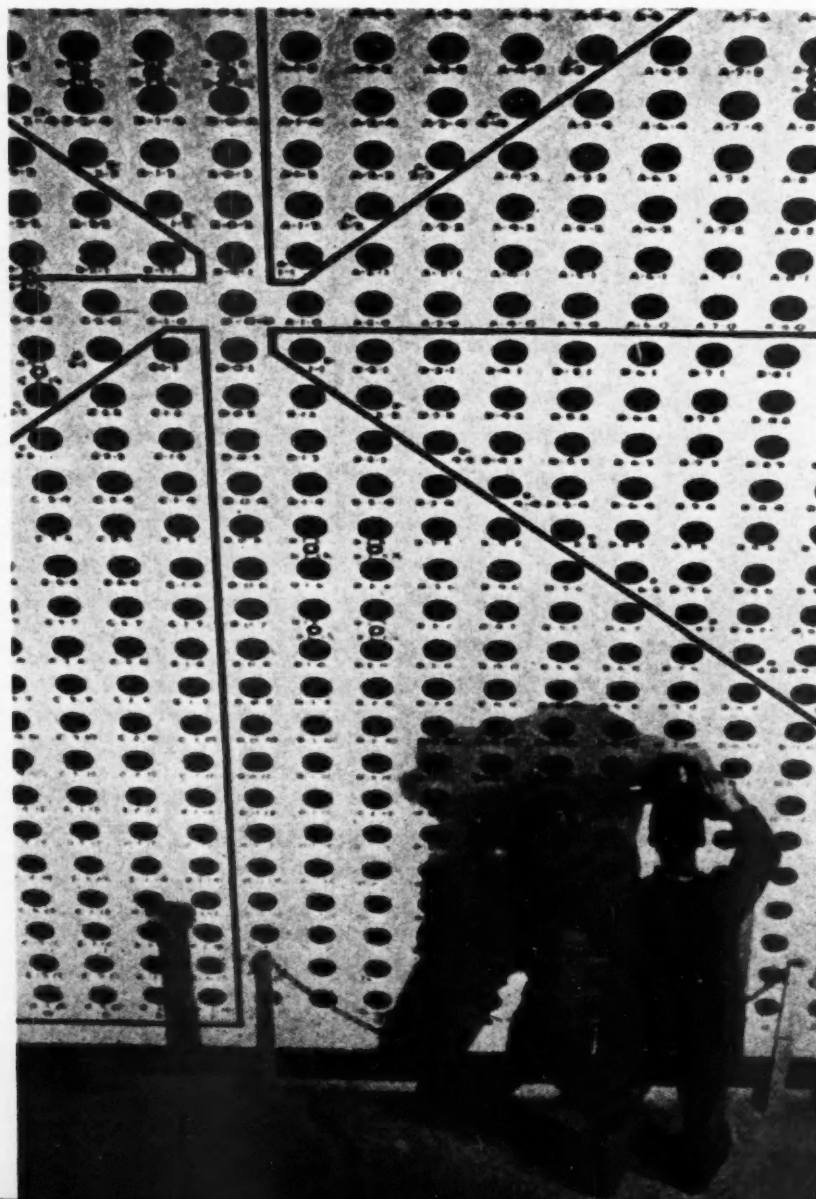
The photographs of sports goods on these pages show items from a display of British goods which will be exhibited from January 27–February 27 at the Design Centre in Ottawa, Canada. The exhibition, arranged by the National Industrial Design Council of Canada in co-operation with the Board of Trade, the United Kingdom Trade Commissioner in Ottawa and the CoID, also includes carpets, glass, pottery and furnishing fabrics selected from the CoID's 'Design Index' by Norman Hay, director, NIDC.

R.C.



REACTION TO ATOMICS

In the field of the industrial application of nuclear power Britain is the pioneer. The first comprehensive programme for building atomic power stations was developed in this country and we are now in a position to build nuclear power stations for export, such as the recent contract awarded to a British company to build a power station near Rome. However, these achievements on the part of British scientists and technologists are being communicated to the public in an unimaginative way. This failure to find a suitable brand image of British industrial atomics not only detracts from the achievements themselves, but also indirectly leaves the communication channels open for the free play of misconceptions about nuclear energy.



Face of a reactor. Brookhaven, U.S.A



LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

the author of this article, is deputy director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts. During 1958 he spent several months in U.S.A where he studied American painting, architecture, design and mass communications.

The fears and superstitions peculiar to the nuclear era have a particular significance in Britain. Memories of the end of World War II as well as the pressures of the cold war are strong. As a result, the military use of atomic energy completely overshadows all its peace time uses. For example, almost no public attention is directed to the industrial or medical aspects of this energy revolution. The only time that the mass media attend to non-military atomics is when there is an accident. In October 1957 the Windscale accident, and especially the 'hot' milk scare that followed it, and lately the irradiated Yugoslavian scientists, one of whom was shipped in a lead-lined coffin, roused the newspapers.

Astounding science fiction in 1951 published a story, *Day of the moron*, by H. Beam Piper, which puts the situation well: "There were still, in 1968, a few people who were afraid of the nuclear power plant. Oldsters, in whom the term atomic energy produced semantic reactions associated with Hiroshima." In this story, set in the near future, Beam Piper has named at least one of the factors underlying the British blockage to setting up a 'creative imagery' of the Atomic Age. After the first A-bombs, then later after the runaway H-bomb at Bikini, journalists played with the danger of global chain reaction (which may have been a legitimate fear before 1945). Such fears thrive on lack of information and anxiety in an analogous way to the spread of rumour. It was overdoses of radiation that caused the abnormality of both *The incredible shrinking man* and *The amazing colossal man*, two recent non-technical science fiction films. The danger-imagery outweighs every other aspect of atomic energy in popular iconography (just as the tests are blamed, in the folkways, for bad weather).

Muffled revolution

The industrial use of atomic energy in Britain, however, is exceptionally important. The continuation of our standard of living depends among other things on new power sources, which means atomic power stations. Thus, themes of the status and survival of the country are involved with nuclear power, but you would not realise it from the Press. This side of the second Industrial Revolution remains muffled in our backward press and public relations (mostly in the hands apparently of Beam Piper's 'oldsters'). Thus we lack a lively iconography of the industrial, agricultural, and medical uses of atomics. This would be achieved not by making false claims but simply by finding apt words and images to give nuclear information in 'portable' forms, both verbal and graphic.

There are, of course, numerous books on the A-Age, 20 or more having been published in England during the last 8 years, but the ones I have read fail to get off the ground. There is about most of them a WEA, Further Education sobriety and morality which is the brand image of an earlier phase of technology than the present one. These books provide information which is, I expect, accurate, but it is below the threshold of usable symbolism. Good symbols confer compact form

and topical currency on their referents, but this has not been done for A-Age Britain. A reviewer in *Astounding science fiction* surveying books on atomic fission, commented on *Calder Hall* by Kenneth Jay: "British understatement, let us say. Let us have an example of a paragraph that is about his extreme in sensationalism, the description of the reactor: '... like a great boiler drum, the size of two houses stacked one above the other, domed top and bottom, with a forest of pipes, sticking out, like pins in a pincushion from the upper dome; stuck to the bottom is another drum... not much bigger than a railway locomotive'." My italics in that quotation are meant to show the uncertainty with which Mr Jay gropes among analogies for want of a governing iconographic idea about the presentation of reactors. A Government White Paper said that "the coming of nuclear power marks the beginning of a new era". It is too bad nobody told the communications people in Britain.

Pioneering strategy

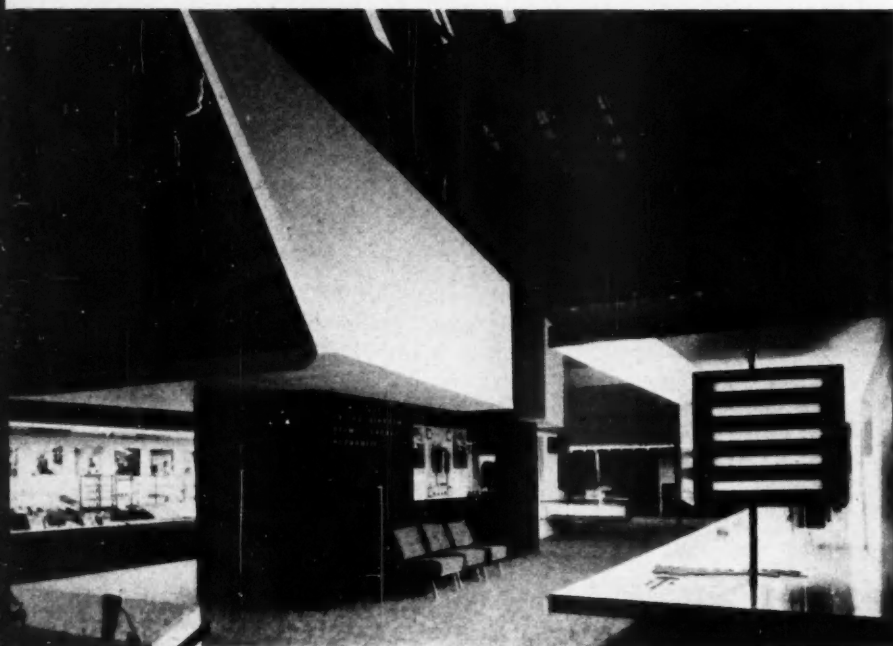
Life magazine's line on the failure of *Pioneer* to get to the moon was: "TRIUMPH FROM A FAILURE... moon rocket's flawed space flight pays off." Some such strategy was called for, and would have been fair, when the reactors at Calder Hall were represented as slow and conservative in recent American publicity about future plans for fusion as opposed to fission reactors. This is true, but Calder Hall remains the first full scale nuclear power station in the world and as such is a landmark, although (as was pointed out in *DESIGN* May 1958 page 26) it was not established as such in the Press.

This communications failure extends backwards from the newspapers and magazines to the companies and their press representatives. A press release in March 1958 from the English Electric, Babcock and Wilcox, Taylor Woodrow Atomic Power Group, begins: "Attached hereto is a sectional view of one of the 2 reactor buildings for the world's first 500 mv atomic power station at Hinkley Point, Somerset..." It continues: "some data of technical interest and general information are given hereunder" (my italics). As the group can build atomic power stations it is odd that it should have celluloid-collar, quill-pen press officers writing its press releases. Almost all the trade material put out by the companies which have their faces turned to the future is embarrassingly old-hat, quaint, and archaic. The pamphlets are full of conventional industrial images, naive 'artist's impressions', and so on. Nuclear reactors are, the message seems inescapable, just another product of British craftsmanship, not very different from ships or bicycles or leather goods, when you come down to it.

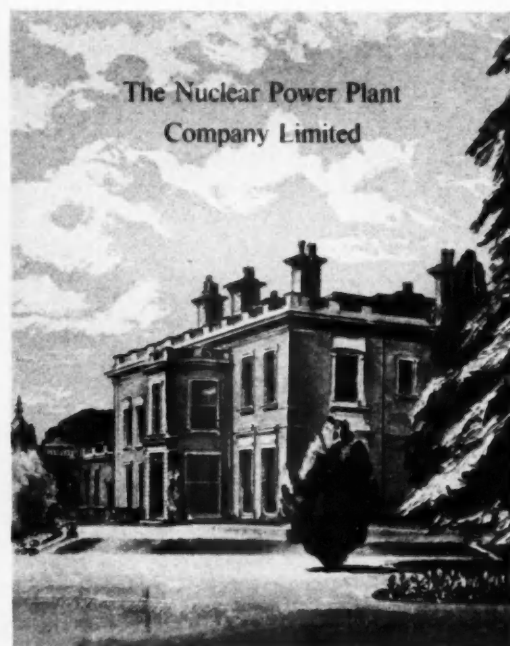
Unsung firsts

British symbol makers have consistently betrayed the achievements of scientists and technicians. The future of the country is linked to its brand image, compounded of graphic symbols, verbal phrases, metaphors, a bundle of data and reactions. Britain, however, in

● *stately piles can cut Britain's atomic lead*



A general view of 1 of the 2 UK Atomic Energy Authority stands at the recent atomic energy exhibition, Geneva. DESIGNER *James Gardner*.



Not a preparatory school, but the title page of a brochure on the Bradwell power station published by The Nuclear Power Plant Co Ltd.

terms of the public channels of communication, presents a stiff, nostalgic brand image which many people outside these islands believe, and which competitors are content not to deny. It is, also, a discouraging, rather than a morale-building image to live and work behind. British coverage of technology falls below the standard set by America, and most efforts to reach the public do not use the full resources of the mass media. As the public expects important communications to have a certain style, a level of finish and up-to-dateness in presentation, messages below this level are simply not taken seriously; they fail to persuade.

British symbol makers – press officers, photographers, journalists – have not managed to *identify* the A-Age (giving typical visual form to its products) or to *orient* the public. They have failed to make clear how the reactors work, their relation to the country's economy and other power sources, to other countries,

and to the future. There is no question of everybody mastering the technical details, but the form and context of the A-Age should be discussed so that people at least know what time it is. The fact that Britain was the first country to adopt a programme of atomic power stations, just as our coal resources are tapering off, sounds to me like a theme for persuasion. The terrific increase in the amount of energy now available to every citizen is an opportunity for the development of a popular iconography. The fact that Britain leads the world in exports of radio-isotopes should also be newsworthy. (In the media even second or third places in athletics are greeted as a triumph, provided an existing record has been broken, even though the winner broke it by more.) But still the publicity for *Nautilus* beats that for ZETA, because Britain's A-Age has not yet come to terms with the strategies of popularisation and persuasion inherent in the mass media.

Poster for TRIGA reactor by General Dynamics Corp, USA. DESIGNER Erik Nitsche. This poster and the Brookhaven photograph on page 42 from *The promise of the atom*, United States Information Services in conjunction with UKAEA, show a dynamic and positive way of presenting the idea of atomic power. The latter, in a single image of man and machine, manages to communicate essential features of the second Industrial Revolution. Compare this with the antiquated and negative image of The Nuclear Power Plant Co Ltd's booklet. The exhibition stand by Mr Gardner represents one of the more positive attempts to publicise one of Britain's major assets.



A-age quiz

- 1 What does Calder Hall produce?
- 2 What was the Manhattan Project?
- 3 One of the following was the site of the first atomic reactor: Los Alamos; the University of Chicago football field; Meadowville, Indiana; Bikini?
- 4 A waldo is: an American reactor; a missile; remote-handling gear; an isotope of uranium?
- 5 Which of these words have been given new meanings by atomic research: excursion, column, long-life, fall-in, critical, beat, fall-out, strategy, input?
- 6 *The Lucky Dragon* is: a missile with a nuclear war head; a Japanese fishing boat caught in fall-out after H-bomb tests at Bikini; a Japanese reactor?
- 7 *The Golden Ball* is: an American boxing tournament; a nickname for the neutron; the reactor at Dounreay?
- 8 Two of the words in the following list do not fit: which ones, and why? ZEPHYR, ZEUS, DIMPLE, NERO, DIDO, PLUTO, ACE, BEPO, SPECTRE III, GLEEP, NEPTUNE.
- 9 At which of the following places are nuclear power plants to be constructed: Berkeley, Hunterston, St Ives, Dungeness, Trawsfynydd?

For answers turn this page upside down.

- Answers
- 1 Electricity and plutonium.
 - 2 The code name for the allied project for the A-Bomb.
 - 3 The University of Chicago football field.
 - 4 Remote-handling gear.
 - 5 Excursion, long-life, critical, fall-out.
 - 6 The Japanese fishing boat.
 - 7 The reactor at Dounreay.
 - 8 SPECTRE III is a reactor at the Associated Electrical Industries' research laboratory; all the others are at Harwell except ACE, a digital computer at the National Physical Laboratories, Teddington.
 - 9 Berkeley, Hunterston, Dungeness, Trawsfynydd.



Whitney Straight, vice-chairman, Rolls Royce Ltd, member of CoID, and chairman of the conference, the first of its kind ever held in this country.

Engineering approaches

More co-operation between industrial designers and the engineering industries was the keynote of the one-day conference – Industrial design and the engineering industries – held in Birmingham last November, and attended by 115 senior executives and designers. The conference aimed to show that with world wide competition good industrial design can be the deciding factor responsible for a sale even when all other specifications have been observed. Extracts from the main addresses are followed by some delegates' views.

The national importance of good industrial design

The Rt Hon Lord Mills, Minister of Power, in his opening address:

"It is still a commonplace that many companies sell machines which were designed 50 years ago – and look it; they can consider themselves fortunate to be still here to tell the tale.

"It seems hardly likely that companies which rely on out-dated designs can maintain their place in a really competitive world. The manufacturer who does not give thought to the design of his products is playing a losing game."

Lord Mills referred to impressive improvements in design of consumer goods since the establishment in 1944 of the CoID. In engineering

products, he said, a great deal needs to be done.

"There are still many firms who think function is all and who neglect appearance. It is very important that an efficient machine embodying the latest in technical achievements should be designed to please the eye and to give promise of its performance.

"In overseas markets this is even more important. The customer does not generally see the product in being – in most cases he judges it on specifications, price, reputation, and the appearance of the article as seen in a brochure."

Industrial design within A E I

G. S. C. Lucas, director and chief electrical engineer, British Thomson-Houston Co Ltd:

"A good engineering design of electrical equipment such as switchgear, transformers, control gear, large motors and generators and large electronic equipment such as radar, integrates the personal contributions of many professional engineers and many highly skilled technicians and craftsmen.

"The appearance designer's chief point of contact will be with the designer-draughtsman during the layout stages, but he must keep in touch with the new manufacturing processes and techniques so that he can understand their scope and limitations.

"The designer-draughtsman has many responsibilities when he is preparing his layouts and manufacturing drawings. These call for the full display of his engineering knowledge, his knowledge of factory processes, factory routine, engineering and company standards.

"He has obtained this knowledge by training and long experience and it is not to be expected that he can be equally skilled as an appearance designer, because this requires a separate training and experience together with an aptitude for the work.

"It is, however, most important that the designer-draughtsman should fully understand and respect the contributions that the appearance designer can make, just as he understands and respects the work of other specialists contributing to the design. He must be convinced in his own mind that outward appearance is important and that the appearance designer has something to contribute which will make the finished design of greater satisfaction to all who have contributed to it and to all who will see and use it.

"A word on this vexed question of 'credits': clearly there is a marked difference between



designing a piece of furniture where the designer's and maker's names can be separately recorded, and the design of a complicated piece of electrical equipment which is the work of many specialists. And so we are left with two problems. Both are related and arise from the employment of appearance design consultants in a large engineering organisation.

Appearance design of power presses

Louis Schuler, managing director, L. Schuler A/G, Germany:



"Engineering products of good functional design bring out an immediate response in the people who use them and see them; they ought to be made to feel more alive. If aesthetic design of the highest order is employed in the building of machines, these otherwise lifeless objects can be infused with life and character, the power of which may be such as to intoxicate the user or operator of the machine with a desire for high achievement.

"It has been shown that good appearance in a press means first of all a clear functional outline. The design and arrangement of the control buttons and levers for the machine should be such as to assist in the operation, through good accessibility and by presenting a clear picture to the operator. Well designed controls eliminate mistakes in operation from the start. The danger of accidents caused by external linkages either directly or through getting in the way of operating controls is eliminated. Maintenance is simplified.

"The first is the use of the two terms, appearance design and industrial design, as though they are synonymous; the other is the question of credits where many specialists are contributing to one industrial design. I may, however, leave the wrong impression if I do not tell you that neither has presented serious problems with the consultants that we have employed."

The smooth surfaces are easy to clean. The mechanisms inside the box frame are not affected by dirt at all. This is of particular importance in the case of sliding surfaces, the life of which is affected most advantageously. These results could have been achieved by providing covers without thought of appearance. Nevertheless, the demand for good appearance was sometimes the cause of these technical improvements.

"As the range of variations which are possible in the field of press design is very small – the shape being dictated within narrow limits by the technical requirements of the finished machine – good appearance design can be obtained by training technical designers in the appearance aspect of their work. As the design proceeds and more complete drawings are produced, individual details may be altered in order to obtain a more satisfactory appearance.

"Good appearance design in presses is by no means a luxury."

Photographs by Sally Adams

Industrial design in heavy engineering

Allan Ashley, of Vickers-Armstrongs, read the paper by John Anderson, manager, power press department, Vickers-Armstrongs (Engineers) Ltd.: (Mr Anderson was unwell and could not attend)



"No longer will the customer accept the old standard designs; his eyes have been opened by the ugliness and monotony of war and he demands a new look, a new appearance in the goods with which he is to furnish his home, and not least of all, his workshop... To remain in the world market, and keep on top, we must be more than first rate engineers, we must also be stylists in our own particular branches of engineering.

"Do not overlook that very important member of the organisation, the service engineer; he has first hand experience on how your product is used, and abused, in the customer's plant. The troubles he experiences in the field fall into two main categories; customers' internal problems over which you have no control, but upon which you can advise, and the multitude of minor faults which arise through lack of thought on the part of the designer, and which can so easily be avoided if a sound design policy is instituted.

"It must be borne in mind that any designer who takes a pride in his job has a not unnatural aversion to belated advice from the sales staff, or the assembly shop floor for that matter. Outsiders, as he secretly regards all others, are inclined to touch him on the raw with ideas of their own, such

as flush mounting a control panel in a column, or the re-location of a rotary-cam limit switch. Admittedly, they could be knocked off by a passing fork lift or a careless crane driver, but why didn't someone tell him the machine was going into an already overcrowded shop?

"The prime necessity of any revised policy which may be envisaged, is to give the designer as much opportunity as possible to meet the customers on their own ground, let him run the gauntlet of the plant engineers and maintenance men; in other words throw him to the lions. He will come back to you a much sadder and wiser man, bruised perhaps, but more receptive of ideas than when he went away.

"If you honestly feel that you do not have suitably qualified staff to carry out this training, or time is against you, by all means call in consultant industrial designers, there is no shame in it. They will be only too pleased to advise.

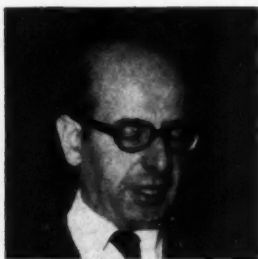
"We have also found in the past that our designers have been handicapped by their lack of experience in the field, and I would advocate strongly that our budding designers be given every opportunity to follow the product through all stages from assembly to shop trials; to have a

period as service engineer, where they will hear exactly what customers think of them first hand, and a period as staff engineer at the beck and call

of every salesman and selling agent who has a customer after his blood. Combine this experience with a tour of duty on technical sales."

The role of the industrial designer

Misha Black, senior partner, Design Research Unit, member of CoID:



"In questioning the need for the designer's existence, engineers have often said that if a thing looks right it is right or, put the other way, if a thing works well it will look well. If these axioms were true the appearance of an object could well be left completely to the engineer satisfied that appearance would grow naturally from function and production with no need for any conscious design appreciation. I wish these simple maxims were always valid but, unfortunately, they now only operate sometimes and then to a limited degree.

"The fallacy lies in the assumption that there is only one way of 'looking right'. But which is 'right'? The sewing machine of 1914 or the 1958 model; the bow-fronted American refrigerator of the 1940's or their straight up and down designs of last year? The machine tools of the 1920's sometimes looking like a haphazard collection of unco-ordinated parts, or the smooth contoured equivalents of the 1950's?

"Only a few products these days are the result of isolated individual endeavour; most design decisions are group decisions and my simple claim is that there is room in this group for the industrial

designer as such. In engineering production his function will usually be of secondary importance, (to the extent that it can be separated from the work of the design team as a whole) but when human emotions are involved, to however limited a degree, in the buying or the using of a product, then the work of the industrial designer can assume an importance often greater than his actual contribution to the creation of the product.

"The industrial designer by training, concentration of interest and personality differs in important aspects from the engineer. If the industrial designer is properly assimilated within the production team, then these very differences become the flint against which the steel of the engineer can strike more imaginative blows. The argument and counter argument between equals, the suggestion and counter proposal between technicians with their interests differently emphasised but fused by the common understanding by each of the problems of all, can produce better results than the immediate acceptance of existing formulae and the easy solution. *The industrial designer may well be the irritant in the drowsy complacent oyster.*"

The engineer and the industrial designer

E. W. Seward, technical manager, W. & T. Avery Ltd:



"It is too often said that industrial designers have been tried and found impracticable: that they only produce a pretty picture of a product which it is quite impossible to produce economically. Where good industrial designers are concerned I believe this is an admission of failure to use them properly.

"If this is your experience it is probably because you have not brought the industrial designer in at the requisite early stage or because you have failed

to integrate him with your product design team.

"All of us can decide whether a product fulfils the requirements of the user. We can all decide whether a product is easy to produce. However, when we come to appearance design we begin to falter. We are dealing with an inexact science, incapable of precise factual evaluation. It is a function of the industrial designer to help us resolve our indecision and to provide the bridge between us and the customer we are so anxious to serve."

The role of the Council of Industrial Design

Sir Gordon Russell, director, The Council of Industrial Design:



"From the first the Council has wished to see how it could best be of service to the great engineering industries, which are of course one of the country's most important export trades. We have received much encouragement during the past few years from certain firms in these industries and from the knowledge that our magazine DESIGN has many readers in these trades. There is undoubtedly a growing feeling in many firms that there is a gap in coping with the appearance of their products and their convenience in use. An even bigger gap exists in formulating comprehensive design policies, so that a firm projects a clear picture of itself in everything it does - its products, advertising, stationery, vans, showrooms, offices, exhibitions

and so on. Such a reorganisation is naturally a question of policy for which the board must be responsible, yet how many firms have a director responsible for design in this sense?

"The Council has a good deal of know-how in dealing with design problems, but we have as much to learn as to teach. We hope that some at least of our audience will wish to give us the benefit of discussing their problems further and exploring methods of initial collaboration.

"Our Record of Designers, from which a short list of designers can be recommended for any type of design work, was consulted last year by more than 700 firms, many of them coming back several times with different problems."

other views



C. H. Flurscheim, *director and chief electrical engineer, Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co Ltd:*
"The function of the industrial designer is not merely to affect the form and shape, but also to be concerned with the ergonomic and functional requirements of the machine."



E. C. Seed, *director, Cowlishaw, Walker & Co (London) Ltd:*
"In a small organisation an independent consultant may upset the designer . . . it is far better if the boss can go round with the blue pencil - then there is not any come-back."



Lord Mills:
"Personally, I think that the blue pencil might get into the wrong hand. The modern industrial designer knows how to co-operate with the staff and I think he should be allowed to do so."



J. D. Udal, *managing director, J. P. Udal Ltd:*
"I think it is fair to say that modern press design has been moving in the direction of the glorification of the packing case shape."



J. Barnes, *director, Allen-Bowden Ltd:*
"You cannot practise industrial design unless you have a proper team spirit."



D. H. Turnbull, *works director, T. S. Harrison & Sons Ltd:*
"The product with the best appearance will get the order."



C. F. Gimson, *engineering manager, British Thomson-Houston Co Ltd:*
"Why is it automatically assumed that the engineer has no taste and must always consult an outside authority? I agree there is nothing worse than applied 'Borax', acorn nuts and 3 strips of chromium plating, but I would like to point out that the largest single electrical exhibit that appeared in the South Bank exhibition and again in the Brussels fair was developed within my group of companies, and was done long before the idea of industrial design was ever thought of."



A. T. Savage, *chief draughtsman, Peter Brotherhood Ltd:*
"What do you do with designer-draughtsman section leaders who have been at the job 30 or 40 years, are still designing 30 or 40 years behindhand and will not see that appearance design is of vital necessity today?"



J. R. Tole, *manager, drawing offices, British Thomson-Houston Co Ltd:*
"Confusion arises when the term 'industrial designer' is applied to somebody who is responsible for part of the complete design . . . I think it would be much simpler if we thought of an industrial design as being the result of the efforts of the mechanical, electrical and appearance designers . . . accepting the appearance designer as a member of the team and of equal status with the others."



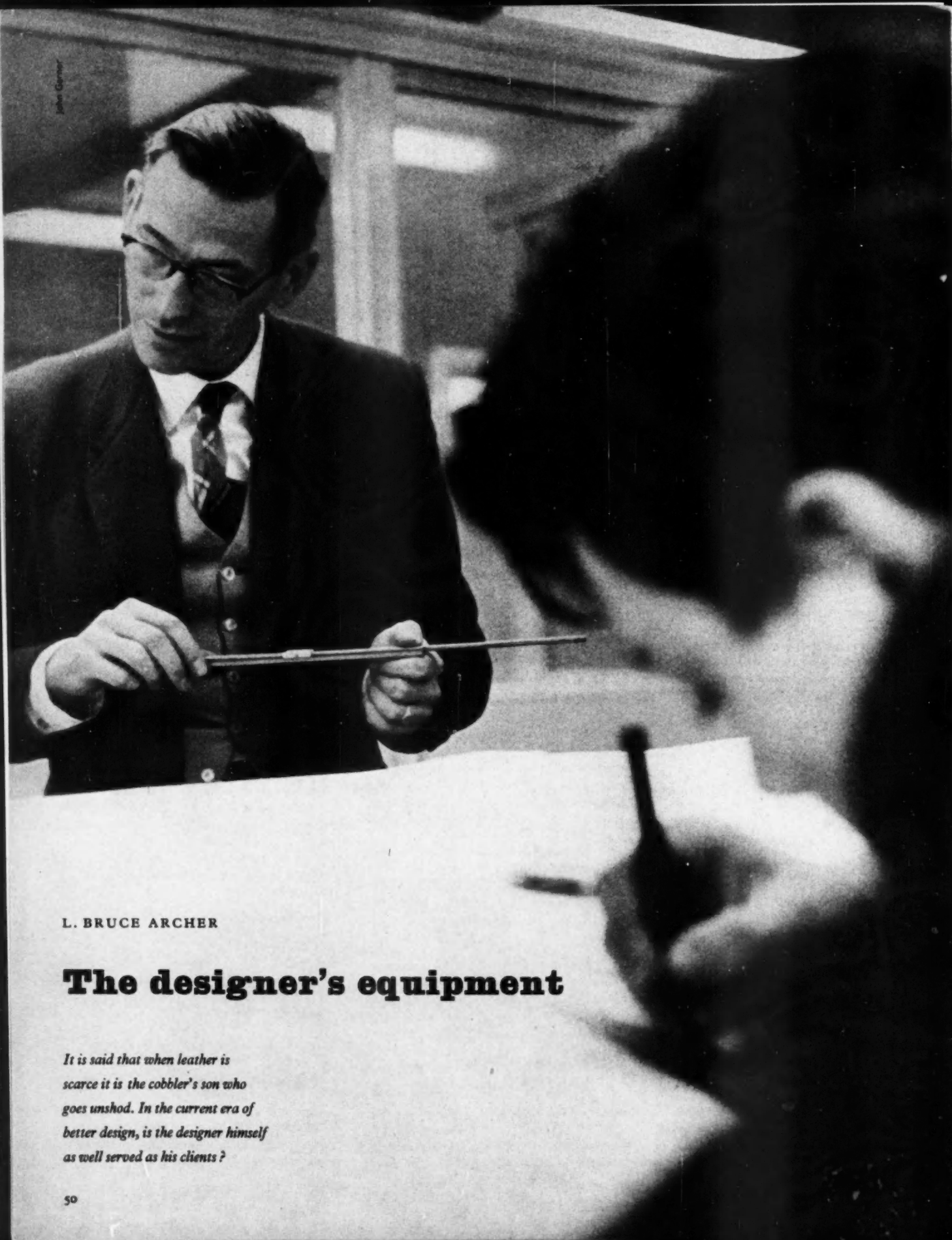
J. C. E. Fortey, *industrial designer, Radiation Ltd:*
"It would help in the vexed question of deciding on the designer's title if he were a professional man with a professional training and, as in most professions, given a degree of some sort."



H. C. Margrett, *manager, business development department, The General Electric Co Ltd:*
"I do not think that it is unreasonable to suggest to the clever engineer that possibly there is a job on which he can profit from the help of a fully trained and experienced man in a slightly different sphere. Appearance design is of great importance."



M. Hope, *chairman, Henry Hope & Sons Ltd:*
"In Sweden before the war I can remember my astonishment at discovering several quite large firms which had recently promoted their chief designers to the position of chief executives . . . I think that it is time we reconsidered the type of training which our chief executives of the future ought to have."



L. BRUCE ARCHER

The designer's equipment

It is said that when leather is scarce it is the cobbler's son who goes unshod. In the current era of better design, is the designer himself as well served as his clients?

Most architects and many industrial designers and engineers are working with basic equipment – drawing board, tee square and stool – which is virtually identical with that which was in common use 60 years ago, and very little different from that on which Sir Christopher Wren laid out his plans for St Paul's Cathedral, and James Watt prepared drawings for his early steam engines. This conservatism is not entirely justified by the unchanging character of draughtsmanship, nor is it universal.

Recent times have seen striking changes in the equipment of most engineering drawing offices, especially in those where large numbers of detail drawings and jig and tool designs are produced. The sheer immensity of the operation involved in the task of getting an aeroplane or an automobile into being makes engineering drawing office productivity more obviously an economic necessity, and at the same time makes productivity a more measurable function than is the case with most product design and architectural drawing offices. Some of the conclusions which can be drawn from investigations made in mechanical and civil engineering fields nevertheless have universal significance.

For example, tests carried out in France, Germany and the USA indicate* that bending over a drawing board which is in a substantially horizontal position, consumes 40–50 per cent more energy than working at a drawing board which is in a substantially vertical position. Pulse and respiration rates are increased and perspiration flows more freely. It appears to be healthier to *stand* at a vertical board than to sit, since *sitting* at a vertical board is associated with a slightly higher incidence of physical disorders. (In reality, most people who work at vertical boards spend about half their time sitting and half their time standing.) Standing over a horizontal board appears to be by far the least satisfactory working position. According to the report, the incidence of physical complaints such as headache, bronchitis, constipation, backache, and foot disorders, is more than twice as great in men who stand at a horizontal board than in those who stand at a vertical board. *Annales d'Hygiene* published the report of a French government fact-finding committee† which attributed deformation of bone structure, disturbances of the digestive organs, and functional complaints of the respiratory organs to the bad working postures demanded by the near-horizontal drawing board.

Posture and perception

Experiments have also been conducted, mainly in the USA, to measure the effect of different equipment and posture on productivity in the drawing office. The range of activities which lend themselves to productivity measurement are severely limited, of course, and neither the time study techniques nor the direct conclusions of these experiments can be applied to the design function.

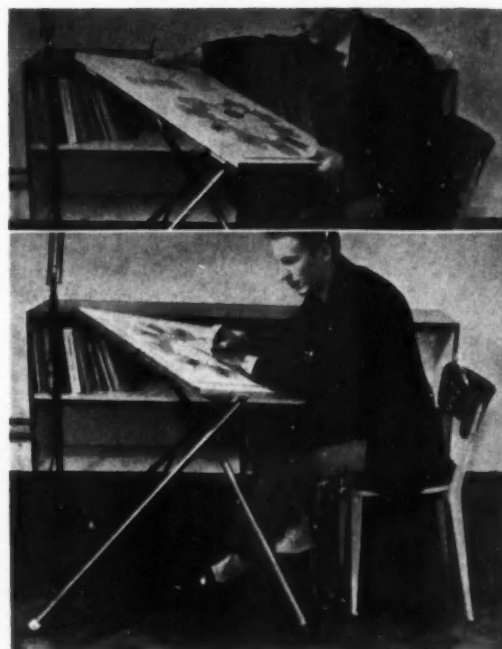
The indirect inferences, however, are important. The effects of posture and fatigue on perception and mental

* Report on the influence of drawing office equipment on efficiency and health, The Batelle Memorial Institute, Ohio, U.S.A.

† Causes of absenteeism in government departments, Professor L. Tanon and J. E. Laurent, Ministry of Education, France.



Few of the pieces of equipment offered by the British drawing office supply industry give the appearance of having been designed. In most cases the detailing is crude and the lettering of the trade names appalling. The Ford Motor Co, when looking for first class drawing office equipment recently, found it necessary to choose a drawing stand from Sweden and a drafting machine from Germany, because it was considered that no British equipment came up to the standard for efficiency, looks, or price. *Viking Hydraulic drawing stand with board.* SUPPLIER *The Nig Manufacturing Co Ltd.* £59 12s 6d. *Kuhlmann ZMG1b drafting machine.* SUPPLIER *The Ozalid Co Ltd.* £40 10s 5d.



If the drawing board is light and freely adjustable, the draughtsman can sit on an ordinary upright chair. This drawing table, without clamps or levers, was designed for his own use by Ronald Armstrong of Design Research Unit. It incorporates a swivel action as well as an easily adjustable angle. In use, it must be supplemented by a cupboard or mobile trolley for instruments, etc. DESIGNER *Ronald Armstrong.* MAKER *Geliot-Whitman & Co.* Approx £8.

alertness are well known. The incidence of errors and omissions in routine drafting has been shown to be in accordance with the general theories on posture, fatigue and mental alertness. There is no reason to suppose that designers are any different from the rest of the community in their physical reactions, and it would appear to follow that a designer must experience less fatigue, retain sharper perception, and make fewer mistakes when sitting or standing in a reasonably erect position than when leaning over a horizontal board.

However, neither the advantages nor the disadvantages of a vertical working surface end with the simple act of tilting the board into an upright position. Most design work, especially when colour rendering is involved, requires the drawing board to be in a horizontal position at least some of the time. The board must therefore be capable of being tilted easily from one angle to another. Moreover, the vertical board must be provided with ample height adjustment. It has been found that unless these adjustments can be made by the draughtsman without the need for putting down his pen, he is unwilling to break off his work, and will adopt a difficult – and therefore inefficient – posture instead. In addition, he must be provided with ample and convenient surfaces on which to scatter his instruments and drawings, since he cannot now leave these on

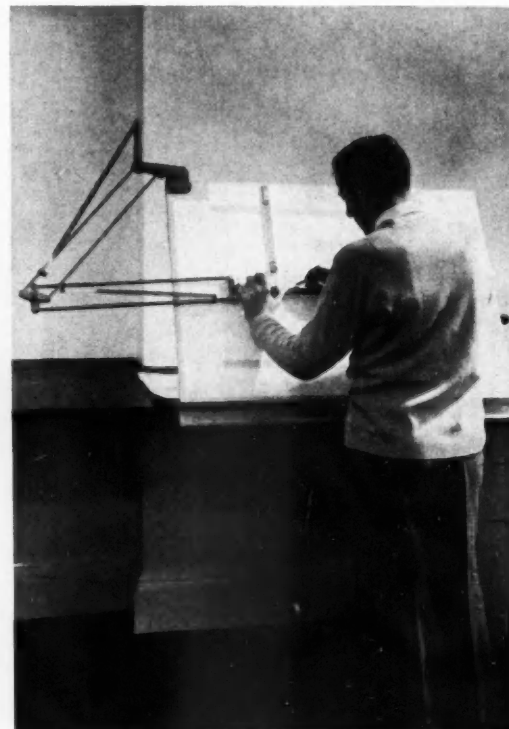
the drawing board. Nor can he use a tee square, so that some form of counterbalanced parallel motion straight edge is required.

An adjustable stand which is convenient, sufficiently rigid, and equipped with an accurate parallel motion straight edge costs in the order of £40–£60. A really first class unit may cost £100 or more. These prices are often regarded by managements as prohibitive. It is quite usual, however, for these same managements to spend £60–£80 in providing their typists with desks and efficient typewriters. Several of those who, when visited by *DESIGN* in connection with this article, pleaded economic considerations in excuse for their ill-equipped design offices, nevertheless sported executive desks and swivel chairs which are listed in office furnishers' catalogues at a sum which would buy first class equipment for 3 or 4 designers.

Advantages of a drafting machine

The most effective form of parallel motion straight edge is the so-called drafting machine. An adjustable board with drafting machine would cost a little more than £100. There is a popular belief that drafting machines, although admittedly most convenient and efficient for detail drafting, are not suitable for design work such as architectural design where long horizontal lines and

● *what are they working on?*



ABOVE and RIGHT A. B. Kirkbride is one industrial designer who uses a universal drafting machine as well as an adjustable drawing table. The drafting machine eliminates the need for tee squares, set squares, protractor and scale rule. The unobstructed reference table surface is a notable feature of this cantilevered drawing board unit. *Roga* desk model drawing table. SUPPLIER *The Ozalid Co. Ltd.* £24 17s 9d (stand and drawing board); *Kuhlmann ZMOBs* drafting machine. SUPPLIER *The Ozalid Co Ltd.* £17 16s 6d.

projection across several views are required. The evidence does not support this belief. On the contrary, the evidence shows that while there is no loss in accuracy or speed in laying out long horizontals there is a substantial gain in both speed and accuracy in the laying out of dimensions and angles. The real drawback of the drafting machine is the space occupied by the arms and counterweights, especially when the board is in its horizontal position. Intelligent placing of adjacent drawing boards and reference tables can overcome this difficulty, but it is a very real one. Most firms that have given any thought to the matter expect to allow 50-80 sq ft per man; 45 sq ft, including gangway space, can be regarded as an absolute minimum for efficient working, on any type of equipment.

It has been suggested that with a fully adjustable drawing table, the designer can sit on an ordinary upright chair, pulling the board this way and that as necessary. Some designers do, in fact, work this way. Others use a stool or chair which can be adjusted to such a height that the change from sitting to standing is accomplished with the minimum movement. The stool is then also used as a prop, with the user half sitting, half standing. It would be difficult to improve on the conventional leather topped stool for this purpose.

Some representatives of the drawing office equipment

supply industry consider that designers on the whole are a very conservative group who fail to display any interest in new materials, methods or equipment. They point out the many new developments in drawing board materials and mechanisms, and demonstrate the extraordinary reluctance of designers even to try them. On the other hand, it cannot be said that British drawing office equipment is so well designed or so inexpensive as to make it irresistible. The administrators of design departments consider that managements are short-sighted and mean in their budgets for capital investment in the drawing office, while managements explain that designers would have to be getting a lot more out of existing equipment before they could justify more expensive equipment on grounds of efficiency.

On the whole, designers and draughtsmen accept this situation with little or no complaint. They have learned to handle their tools instinctively and to see past them to the products which they are designing. They cannot readily stand aside to consider their own equipment as they would a client's. In any case, each is convinced that he is unique and he is ready to believe that there would be no standard equipment to suit his eccentricities. This is quite untrue, of course. Designers are as alike as peas in pods when they are engrossed at their drawing boards.



There are some otherwise progressive engineering manufacturers who still use old-fashioned drawing office equipment. The main drawbacks of the traditional near-horizontal board, which was used in this former Ministry of Aircraft Production equipment, are due to the difficult postures which the draughtsman must adopt when working on some sectors of the board. There is evidence that between 50 and 75 per cent of the errors and inaccuracies which occur on engineering drawings are in a region near the top of the drawing sheet where bad posture has blunted perception.



On more modern equipment, where the board may be tilted to any angle, the draughtsman sits erect on a swivel chair adjusted so that the change from sitting to standing is easy, and raises or lowers the board. Reference material is behind him on a sliding topped table which provides storage. This equipment was specially made for The De Havilland Aircraft Co Ltd. *Adnel Springbrook* drawing stand with parallel motion drafting unit. SUPPLIER *Laves Rabjohns Ltd.* £45 17s 3d. Desk unit. MAKER *G. Savitt and Sons Ltd.* £44. Swivel chair (K300/3). MAKER *Laabank Office Equipment Ltd.* £7 13s 1d.

New generation

The A40 Saloon, the best-looking product of the British Motor Corporation, is the result of a new liaison between The Austin Motor Co Ltd and its Italian styling consultant Pinin Farina.



JACK STAFFORD

This is an adventurous small saloon car, with a good luggage capacity. The fact that it looks like an estate car is misleading. It has much more than the normal share of qualities for a car in its price bracket, but it cannot be compared, either in usable load capacity, or in ease of loading, with a true small estate car, such as the A35 Countryman, Morris Minor 1,000 Traveller or Hillman Husky.

As an ordinary motorist, I found it a superb motor car. I drove it approximately 600 miles in different weather conditions. Roadholding, steering and braking are excellent, and the body is waterproof in driving rain at all speeds from zero to over 70 mph. The doors are exceptionally large but light, the heater-demister is efficient and flexible in operation, and there is an excellent boot. I found barely enough headroom at the

back (I am just over 6 ft) but the sense of spaciousness in the interior is better than in many much larger cars, and is matched by all round visibility. There is almost complete standardisation with other BMC products – mainly the A35 – but the A40 has a definite big-car feel and I think it is superior to either the A35 or Minor 1,000 saloon.

Safety factors have been considered; as well as good visibility, roadholding and braking, the steering system gives much greater than normal protection against impact. The steering column is short, and set well back from the front of the car with the linkages and trackrod behind it. In consequence, only a very severe collision would deprive the car of its steering, unlike many cars where the trackrod is set just behind the bumper. The bumpers are unusually sturdy and give good pro-

A40 Saloon. £676 7s. A40
de luxe Saloon. £689 2s.
Prices include purchase tax.

BELOW LEFT The generous but light doors give good access to the rear when the front seats are folded, and excellent access to the front seats, as shown here.

BELOW The clean sweep of the dashboard and parcel shelf is spoilt by the heater and choke control. The speedometer is well positioned in front of the wheel, but its layout is not satisfactory (see DESIGN February 1958 page 34).



tection. The horizontal top of the instrument panel is non-reflecting, and the edge is padded, while the parcel shelf also has a flexible edge of extruded plastics.

The interior design is pleasingly straightforward, but there are various irritating omissions. There is no effective interior light, which is badly needed for loading luggage at night. There is one rather inconvenient ashtray just behind the windscreen for the front passengers and nothing at all for the rear passengers. The choke and heater controls are out of keeping with the rest of the interior, giving an almost shoddy feeling, although both are good functionally. Self-cancelling indicators and self-parking wipers are not fitted, even on the *de luxe* version; the differences between standard and *de luxe* are very slight.

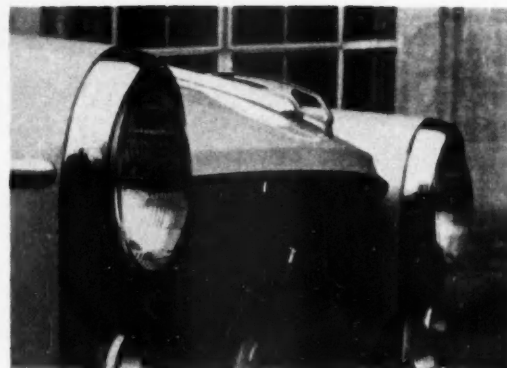
The arrangement of back seat, although exception-

ally comfortable, is probably the weakest functional part of the design. The back squab folds forward to give extra luggage room, but the extra space made has to be filled from inside once the boot is filled from outside. The space directly behind the front seats is virtually wasted, while the back squab takes up valuable luggage room; surely if the back were detachable and could be stored behind the front seats, with a thin folding partition to protect the back seat itself, the whole luggage space would be vastly more usable? This point was also brought out when the A40 was reviewed in the *Autocar*.

The exterior design is again straightforward, but stylish in the best sense of the word. The main innovation is at the rear, where the roof continues at full height over the boot, ending in a costly but pleasing



The effect of thickness of a surface is given to roof and bonnet by the folded details shown here. These details do much to make the design look



solid and sturdy; one forgets that the body is actually made out of thin sheet steel, which normally governs the first reaction to this size of car.



Sir Leonard Lord Pinin Farina

The introduction of the A40 represents a significant step in British car design inasmuch as it is one of the few occasions that an outside designer has been consulted by a major company – the significance is doubled when the designer is Pinin Farina. Signor Farina, who is seen here with Sir Leonard Lord, chairman of The Austin Motor Co, has virtually grown up with automobiles. At 13 he was working in his brother's workshop building bodies for cars, and during the first World War the shop – *Stabilimenti Farina* – built aeroplanes as well. In 1930 he left his brother and established his own coach building firm. Farina's method of working is uncommon in that, essentially, he designs as a sculptor might (he has been likened to Marini), producing full scale models first, which are modified as the design progresses, and doing the working drawing last, immediately before production. In 1957 Farina was elected an Honorary RDI, the only Italian to hold such an award. At the time of the announcement of the A40 Sir Leonard Lord promised further examples of the Farina line in future models. Two of these have recently appeared.

detail which wraps back under. This cantilevered effect gives the roof surface an illusion of considerable thickness. The tooling and production of this detail were difficult problems, due to the shape required being undercut on all four sides, but here appearance was given priority over costing. A similar detail is shown at the front of the bonnet, but this is achieved without problems as the unit is not an enclosed form.

Would an Austin staff stylist have been given the freedom which Pinin Farina has had on this project, both to ignore certain cost considerations and also to place appearance before function at times? The whole styling of the rear of the car – where there was almost complete freedom – shows both these; the roof detail already discussed, and the rear window inclination which gives the car such grace, completely inhibit a large rear door. Signor Farina was first consulted some 3 years ago; a top management decision. He produced a complete prototype within a year, and from this no modifications were made by Austin's without his approval. The brief is reported to have been a "clean

sheet of paper". Now any designer knows that a clean sheet of paper is something no client actually has unless he is starting a new business. In fact, the chassis was already determined, including the control positions, and from these controls the front seats are inevitably determined also – they are A35 seats with a modified pivot. Actually it was a packaging problem, and was superbly solved.

At present Signor Farina visits Austin's at Longbridge once a month, and a visit is made to him in Turin by Austin executives once a month also. Albert Moore, the Austin chief body designer, had, when I talked to him, so far not met Signor Farina in Italy, although he was chiefly responsible for modifying designs for Austin production.

This A40 probably owes as much to the consultant's status as to his skill – it is certainly the first BMC product which has an undeniable 'style', although I think it is only a perfect solution to 1 problem, not the 2 that were attempted. The perfect saloon/estate car is not with us yet.

USA **Expanding market for Britain**

LAZETTE VAN HOUTEN

In this article the author, who is DESIGN's correspondent in the USA, discusses the prospects for British exporters of durable consumer goods to the American market. She reports on a large number of interviews with American retailers, importers, advertising agencies, marketing experts and representatives of British and foreign firms, and concludes that British manufacturers could make more of their reputation for high quality by matching it with an equal emphasis on modern design. Her illustrations suggest the types of product that Great Britain could sell but which are being supplied by American or other foreign manufacturers. A recent conference at Eastbourne organised by the Dollar Exports Council included a paper on Design Policy for Dollar Markets, by I. M. Stewart, extracts from which are quoted on page 63. Mr Stewart's paper bears out many points reported here by Mrs Van Houten.

If more British firms want to export their products successfully to the United States they should heed the unanimous advice of their fellow countrymen who are already enjoying a profitable venture: know your market and have respect for it. This is the crux of the opinion of dozens of representatives of British companies engaged in gainful trade with this country.

A thorough study of American needs, buying habits and merchandising techniques is advocated. Factual information about the many factors of American life and their relation to individual products must be acquired and evaluated. Such a fact-finding survey requires more than a cursory inspection of Eastern seaboard cities if adequate knowledge of the various factors involved is to be obtained. Many American representatives and trade experts feel that a firm benefits by including its designer in such a study trip.

It is not an easy job. A country of 3 million square miles has a diversity of regional differences. Climate, social and ethnic structure and population density vary widely from coast to coast. The American people share a variety of beliefs, interests and preferences.

As members of the largest middle class country in the world the majority of Americans have an astonishing variety of mechanised household equipment. They are great believers in gadgets and in labour-saving devices. Their new houses, regardless of income, will

probably be on one level with an open floor plan. They are designed to be run with no servants, or at most, a part time maid. They will have some outdoor living space even if north of the Mason-Dixon line or east of the Rockies. They will probably have a barbecue and are likely to have a swimming pool. (It is estimated that the home pool business in 1958 reached \$400 million.) The house will have a car port for 2 cars, 2 bathrooms, and a kitchen that looks like those illustrated in the women's magazines. It acknowledges a sun that is more ardent than in England and wind and snow that are more drastic.

The furnishings of the average home are apt to be a hodge-podge of styles and fashions. This attests to the many divergent elements in contemporary American life as well as to taste insecurity during a transitional style period. There is a strong lingering admiration for traditional furniture. Modern design has nevertheless made enormous inroads in even the moderate income group during the past 15 years.

Symbols and standards of quality

Two leading authorities in the field of motivational research quoted in *Home Furnishing Daily* explain the present consumer uncertainty on style by pointing out that the widening middle class has had little preparation for making decisions which involve aesthetics. Ernst Dichter, director of the Institute for Motivational Research, believes that the industries which make goods for the home have failed to provide recognised symbols and standards of quality which will re-assure "the recent Bourgeoisie", who are not equipped by education or background to judge more than practical and utilitarian aspects. Such consumers, he points out, have no trouble in choosing an automobile or equipment for a modern kitchen. But the difference between good and bad taste in furniture, for instance, is beyond them, let alone the ability to determine the validity of arguments for modern design in a modern world.

Louis Cheskin, director of the Color Research Institute, believes that a current emphasis on traditional or 'contemporised' versions of traditional styles is due to the increased buying power of the new medium-to-high income group. To these people



traditional design stands for prestige, good breeding, reliability. At the same time, however, a conflict arises because it is sensed that objects of traditional design somehow do not fit into the pattern of present-day life which demands function, easy maintenance and utility.

Consumer advocates of modern design, on the other hand, tend to be those (both young and old) who are trained to some extent in appreciation of the arts. Theirs is a growing number.

Dr Dichter explains that the recent high fashion decorating dictum of mixing modern with traditional designs has further confused the average consumer. Unlimited freedom of choice is unsettling and even devastating to the uninformed.

Both experts agree that manufacturers should sponsor consumer training courses on furniture design. Also they should provide symbols which will assure consumers of quality, workmanship, and correct taste. Colour information, Mr Cheskin has discovered, is also badly needed by the American consumer. He proposes that manufacturers initiate a colour education programme based on scientific facts.

Traditional east and south

A national tendency to cling to the past on the one hand and on the other to relish certain aspects of the present, makes the American market difficult to evaluate. The average American will often insist upon the latest equipment and furnishings for his office, and happily go home to a pseudo-Colonial house in which, however, he demands an electric dishwasher, garbage disposal, colossal freezer and refrigerator. He is conservative one moment and fanciful the next. In general it can be said that the farther west one goes the less conservative habits of living tend to be. The east and the south are still the bulwarks of tradition.

But wherever he lives the average American has become accustomed to a multiplicity of possessions; 2 cars, a radio in every room and even 2 television sets. The American male is inured to helping around the house and has developed into a first rate cook due to the popularity of the barbecue supper party. He may paint, play a guitar or build furniture on those week ends which he can spare from the golf course. He and his wife are keen on sports and eager to buy the best equipment. He may race a sports car and they will both probably skin dive, ski or sail. (The boat industry last year accounted for about \$2 billion.)

How the American spends his leisure time is being carefully studied by sociological experts. More leisure time due to increasing automation will admittedly have

far-reaching effects on American life. Russell Lynes, in a recent issue of *Harper's Magazine*, points out that until fairly recently American women used their leisure to perform good works or uphold the cultural level of the community. Men, he contrasts, used what little leisure they had to rest up for more work. This unfairly balanced situation is fast changing. Men have broadened their interests and activities. It is no longer considered 'sissy' to include art and design among them. This fact about the American male, coupled with the time to indulge his newly acquired enthusiasms, will have fascinating repercussions on the products that he will covet and eventually procure.

Another significant aspect of the American social scene is a new and growing discontent with our economic pattern. We have begun to understand that the consumer needs of our domestic market have been largely taken care of and that 'buy now' programmes are designed, not because we really need the goods, but to keep our economy operating. Lately, considerable critical attention has been given to a book which challenges a system of values based on the private man's acquisition of goods to the detriment of public facilities - schools, hospitals, scientific institutions, housing, recreational facilities, etc. John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* urges a new understanding of these problems on the American people who are already showing symptoms of dissatisfaction.

Detroit is already witness to the fact that we are no longer quite as sure as we used to be that a new car every year is necessary to maintain our social position. Perhaps even Cadillac, whose popularity is explained by motivational researchers on the grounds that it is a prestige symbol, is suffering from a newly glimpsed idea that the first quality of an automobile is mechanical function. A 3 year-old Cadillac is in this respect as good as the latest model.

'Made in Britain' quality

Many Americans are showing signs of a growing impatience with 'fashion' merchandise. They are increasingly vocal about their distaste for the theory of artificial obsolescence and consequently more insistent upon quality. They are naturals for the 'Made in Britain' label which evokes the image of stable quality.

This matter of quality is of great importance in considering possibilities for British exports. Persons who have had wide merchandising experience here believe that with few exceptions British goods should represent the upper end of the price scale. They agree that it would be a great mistake for exporters to attempt to identify the British market with low cost merchandise or to try to compete here with countries which have lower wage standards.

Certain British goods have for years enjoyed a prestige image in this country. Cashmere sweaters, long the debutante's delight, have become the cherished dream of the typical American girl. British woollens in general are accepted without question as the best money can buy. Scotch whisky has somehow turned into a socially more correct drink than our native



1 Living room of a house at Croton-on-Hudson, New York; an example of the one-level, open plan dwellings designed for increasing numbers of middle class American families. Architect Marcel Breuer.

American designs

2 Designs by Charles Eames continue to be popular for a certain type of modern American interior. Cast aluminium is combined with cushioned vinyl or woven plastics upholstery in a new collection of weatherproof furniture intended for either outdoor or indoor use. The reclining lounge chair sells for approximately \$200. Tables range from \$150 - \$195. Made by Herman Miller Furniture Co.



3 This linen crash drapery fabric, designed by Ross Littell, is indicative of fabrics which are popular for modern interiors in America. It retails for \$7.50 per sq yd. From Knoll Textiles.





bourbon. And thanks to Commander Whitehead, tonic water has become an indispensable part of gin. British men's shoes, Major Grey's Chutney and Rolls-Royce automobiles are all symbols of British distinction to the American mind.

It is a sad fact that British contemporary design for the home has made practically no dent in this market. A survey of imported articles in one architect's home lists Scandinavian and Italian furniture, Scandinavian and German dinnerware, Austrian, German, Scandinavian and Italian glass, Swiss and Italian typewriters, Scandinavian stainless steel, German cutlery, accessories from many countries in the world, but nothing from Britain. Britain is represented by tea and marmalade and biscuits, by sweaters and men's shoes and hats, a Hillman *Minx* and a Jaguar.

No modern idiom from Britain?

There seems to be no specific British idiom in contemporary home furnishings which would appeal to that large and growing middle-to-upper income group which is a firm adherent of modern design. It is safe to say few Americans can name an English designer since William Morris.

Danish and Swedish furniture design on the other hand is a tremendous success in America not only at the high priced import level, but in American made, competitively priced lines as well. Hans Wegner, Finn Juhl, are only 2 designers' names which are widely known here. Scandinavian fabrics, dinnerware, stainless steel, glass and ceramics are also selling extremely well in that segment of the market that can afford them.

Scandinavian design is popular in this country largely because it is adaptable and informal; it can even be folksy and cosy. It is the perfect answer to the average American's dualism; with its functional simplicity it is subtly reminiscent of the past.

A similar quality is present in the Chiavari chairs from Italy that have become standard equipment in thousands of American homes. Light in scale and weight yet strong, these chairs are a new version of an old design. They are inexpensive, adaptable and graceful. Italy is also a highly regarded source for department and gift store buyers who find a ready market for such Italian household objects as glass, ceramics and lamps.

Japanese design of both decorative and useful objects for the home has proved appealing to Americans. Ceramics, lamps, stools, hibachis, screens, etc, have enormous popularity for contemporary houses. Oriental folk arts and crafts are generally highly regarded.

In American furniture the work of the established designers - Eero Saarinen, George Nelson, Charles Eames, Edward Wormley, Florence Knoll - is still the criterion for top lines.

But whatever their style tendency Americans are influenced in their ultimate choice by a constant barrage of advertising in their daily papers, monthly magazines, on their radios and television sets. Consequently British manufacturers weighing the possi-

bilities of an export programme must ask themselves what kind of promotional activity it will require.

Americans are advertising conscious. They are alive to new angles and interested in investigating them. But they have heard and seen so much propaganda that they must be considered experts in judging advertising and promotional campaigns.

The same applies to packaging. The American product is generally presented in a first rate outer dress. The quality of design is high for even the most inexpensive product. Americans are subconsciously conditioned to top notch advertising photography, graphics and general design of product promotion.

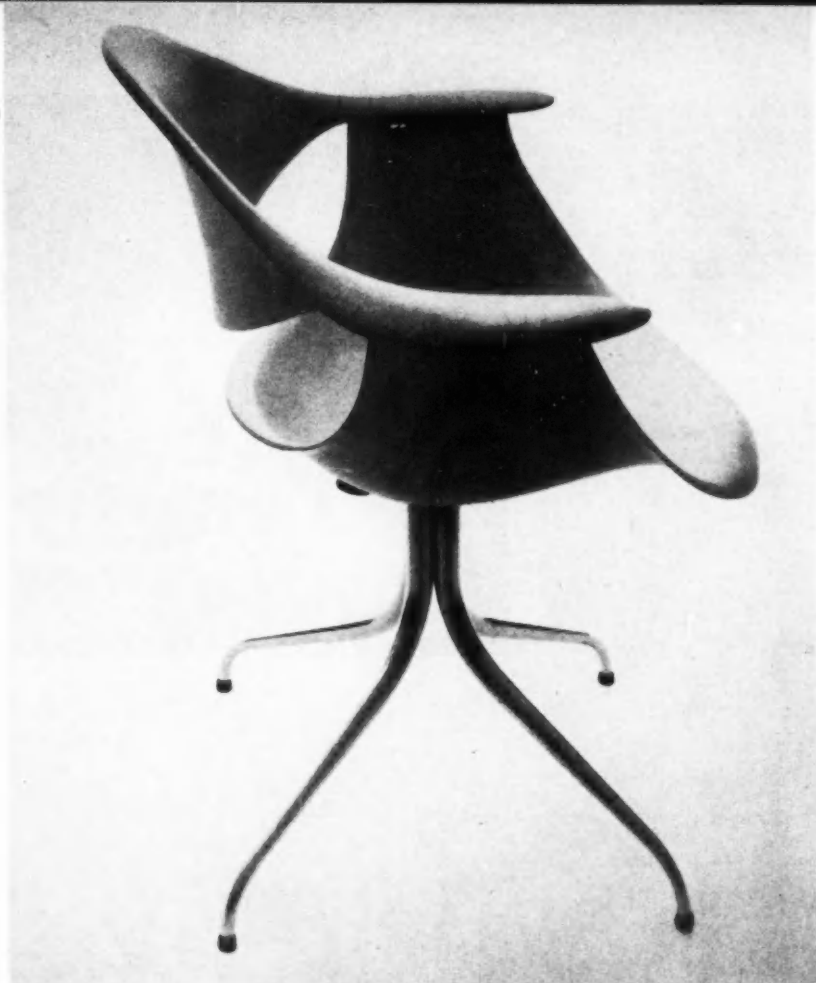
Many British manufacturers have found it expedient to work with American design and advertising firms who can express the American 'angle' to promote the product. Packaging for such typically American giftware items as barbecue sets, steak sets, certain bar equipment, for instance, is often designed on the American side of the Atlantic because of peculiarly national characteristics.

Realistic thinking needed

Besides ascertaining the pertinent facts about Americans and their buying habits and assessing promotional techniques, a study of American distribution patterns and merchandising methods is urged for exporters. National representatives claim that a lack of realistic thinking on this subject in Britain has ruined the successful promotion of good products in America. All facets of distribution should be made a prime concern of the initial steps of any firm contemplating an export programme to this country.

Prompt deliveries are essential to satisfactory sale of all products. There has been much complaint, which retailers insist is justified, that British firms do not adhere to delivery schedules. It is a common accusation against British importers that insufficient stock is carried here and that deliveries are too slow. Some firms have successfully solved this by presenting new items only after there is enough stock on hand to cover usual contingencies. Some dinnerware firms make it a selling point that orders can be filled within 10 days. It is therefore possible for stores to do business with them without large investment. Whatever system is used fast deliveries should be insured. The best outlet for a particular product must be decided. Above all properly qualified representation is essential initially.

Barring world wide conflict, and with the technical difficulties solved, the introduction of new British products to the American market should be favourable. Not only are Americans eager to sample foreign wares, but the government and leading business men are cognisant of the need to encourage trade. It is understood that imports can no longer be separated from exports and that the Soviet economic offensive must be countered by an expanded United States foreign trade. These attitudes combine to develop a healthy climate for the successful selling of British merchandise; but it must be merchandise that supplements high quality with a vigorous attitude to design.

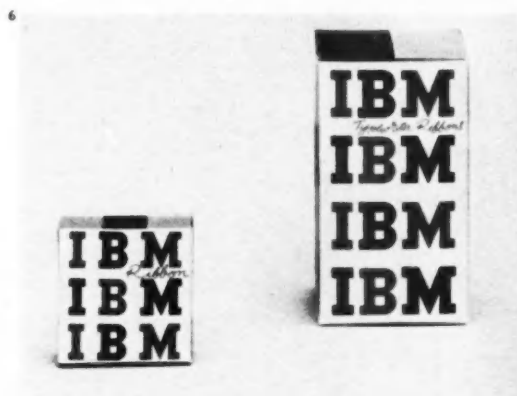


American designs

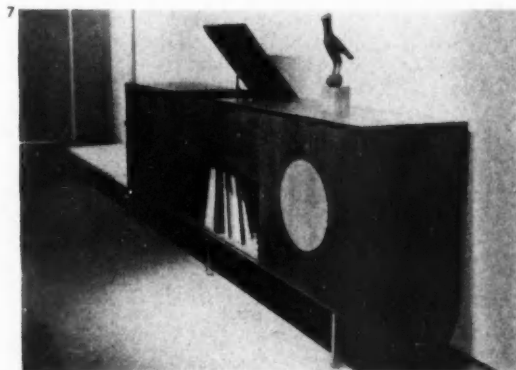
4 One of the first original chair forms in glass fibre since the well known Eames chair of 1954. Two versions are available with fixed or adjustable back rests (the fixed back version is shown here). Legs are made from tapered tube and are bolted to a cast metal supporting plate. Similar legs are used for a range of desks and tables. The chair was designed by Charles Pollock of George Nelson and Co Inc for the Herman Miller Furniture Co.



5 Eero Saarinen's designs for Knoll Associates have a faithful following in the USA. A collection of single pedestal plastics chairs and tables is his latest work. Armchair sells for approximately \$100 and the small table for \$59.

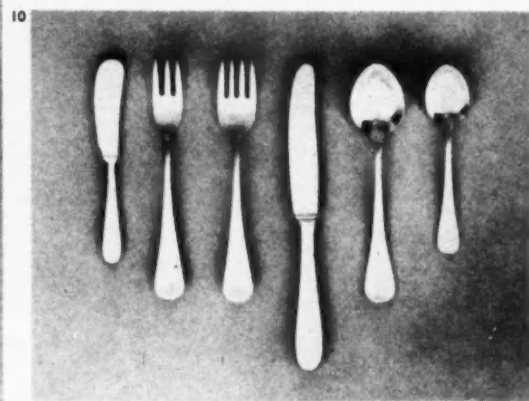
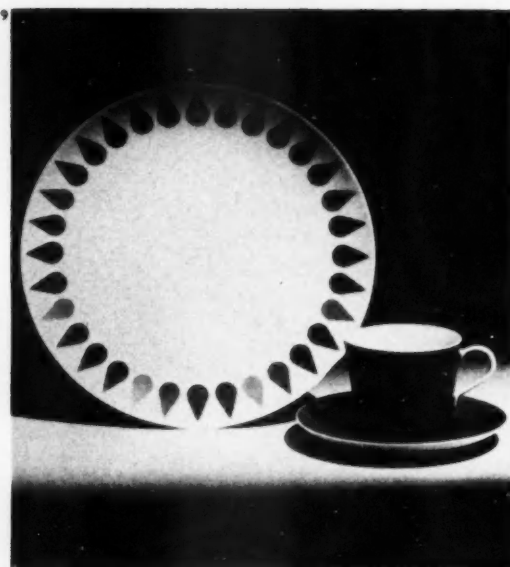


6 Good packaging plays an important part in selling goods on the American market. These typewriter ribbon boxes were designed by Paul Rand for IBM.



7 George Nelson's versatile cases express the type of American design which appeals to informed and discriminating Americans. This example is from a group of 3 multi-service units. It retails for \$890 in rosewood or teak. The radio-phonograph cabinet is adaptable for either television or stereo sound.

Imported designs



8 This adjustable lounge chair comes from Norway. Similar models from Denmark and Sweden are popular in the U.S.A. The chair and stool are approximately \$260. Imported by Raymor.

9 Japan is growing in importance as a source for dinnerware. Fraser's have just introduced in the American market a collection of modern designs made in Japan. This is *Sheba* which sells for \$6.95 for a 5-piece place setting.

10 Stainless steel flatware from Germany and Denmark have had wide sale in America. A successful pattern imported by Georg Jensen Inc is *Moselle* from Germany which sells for \$12.25 for a 6-piece place setting.

11 Versatile and easily portable pieces like this extendable cart from Denmark are greatly in demand in the U.S.A. It sells for \$95. Imported by Raymor.

Quotes

The American Market

I. M. Stewart, chairman and managing director, Thermotank Ltd, speaking on Some general principles of design policy for the dollar markets, at the recent Eastbourne conference organised by the Dollar Exports Council. Other speakers who stressed the importance of imaginative design in selling to the dollar areas were Joseph P. Kasper, president, Associated Merchandising Corp., New York, who spoke on North American department stores - important operations; and Commander W. E. Whitehead, director, Schweppes (Overseas) Ltd, who spoke on British industry's public relations in North America. The papers were followed by lively discussions in which delegates described some of their own experiences in exporting to America.

"... The simplicity of the word 'design' is deceptive. It has many shades of meaning and embraces many variables. In order to give the word a simple definition, however, we can refer to design generally as the application of ideas to materials.

"It is clear that the relative importance of the factors which influence design vary widely in different industries, but to generalise further I have set out with 3 basic assumptions:

- 1 That in dollar markets the key factor in the sale of British goods is quality design.
- 2 That every product designed for sale has an appearance and that appearance must be given particular consideration.
- 3 That good design policy in a company or industry will reveal itself in all phases and spheres of operation.

"In the American market to-day, quite apart from such influences as trade restrictions, credit terms and depreciation rates, which are outside the scope of this paper, there are special circumstances which do not apply in other countries. For example the US buyer is deeply affected by appearance, colour and shape. He is influenced by gimmicks, gadgets and ostentation more readily than we are. He is trained to buy more frequently than the European, he does not regard even capital goods as permanent companions and he lives in an atmosphere where obsolescence is organised and new models are symbols of prestige. For all these reasons the US manufacturer is compelled to give styling high priority.

"While contemporary enterprise in this country cannot succeed in dollar markets unless it is alive to the novelty loving instincts of the Americans, I suggest that it is vital that British manufacturers should not slavishly copy the American pattern but strive to maintain the traditional integrity of their designs. To create temporary fillips in exports, by selling attractive-looking flimsy goods, in order to meet a price or to allow good appearance to interfere with specified technical efficiency, would be extremely dangerous, and do immeasurable harm to our firmly established reputation for reliability. The maintenance of integrity need not necessarily be dull nor quality unimaginative.

"In the USA it is not necessarily the average customer that we should aim to attract; there exist special quality markets between mass markets where goods will not sell by the million but in sufficient quantity to make good profits. . .

"These markets, though too small to tempt the mass producer, are immensely big and valuable from our point of view. . .

FREQUENT USE OF CONSULTANTS

"It is recognised (by American manufacturers) even in heavy industry that special treatment of design can create the desire to possess and a goodwill for the design in question. . .

"Since the war US manufacturers of rugged and bulky equipment such as heavy tractors, locomotives, machine tools and printing presses, who in the past relied solely on their own functional designers, have called in a professional industrial designer to guide their thinking on styling, packaging and advertising.

"The manufacturer's design policy is usually entrusted to someone at or near board level. As a rule their design staff and production people combine as a team with the industrial designer on a basis of equality under the chairmanship of the appropriate executive. It is through this cross-fertilisation of ideas that the group can produce a solution to whatever the design problem may be.

"... But the point to notice is that the consultant is brought in at the outset, and is given full scope to acquire an intimate knowledge of the company's operations. His advice is sought at every stage of the development of the product right up to the point of sale, so that style and appearance are not merely features that are added afterwards. . .

10 POINTS FOR BETTER SALES

"During this paper I have tried to argue in favour of certain principles which I feel are appropriate in approaching design problems for dollar markets. The first 3 I referred to at the beginning:

- 4 Given functional equality, good appearance and style in a design will be the decisive selling factors in a competitive market.
- 5 Every design should be an integral part of its intended function.
- 6 The maintenance of good design will be stimulated by efficient sales.
- 7 To-day's successful prototype will become tomorrow's standard design.
- 8 Good functional designers are not necessarily good stylists and the services of an industrial design consultant should always be considered.
- 9 There may be a design for the sale or purchase of 'know-how' which will lead to product sales.
- 10 Good design policy generates from presentation plus quality sales.

"It has been my purpose to suggest that unless we have a sound design policy generating from the presentation plus quality factors, British products will not sell in the dollar markets."

Functionalism and human needs

Stephen Spender on Thoughts on design in everyday life; the 1958 Design Oration of the S.I.A. Extracts:

"... Between the two extremes of aeroplane and saucepan there are a great many things which can be displaced and become objects of utility which are indistinguishable from works of art, and which may in fact be occasionally regarded as the one, occasionally as the other, or all the time as both. The most obvious examples of these are teacups, teapots, vases. But they include a vast range of objects which actually could be extended; for example, the coins we carry round in our pockets, every one of which could be a supreme work of art, the curtains and coverings in our sitting rooms, furniture, perhaps even fountain pens. And then also there are certain things which could very well be at a stage where they combine function with audacious ornament - as did phaetons in antiquity, and carriages before the invention of motor cars. Bicycles and motor cycles, which are nearer than automobiles to being toys, are perhaps examples of machines which could have more charm and audacity of design.

"I have spoken so much about functionalism because when I go to an exhibition like the more or less permanent one at The Design Centre in Haymarket, I have the impression that what I call the two extremes of utilitarian functionalism - the aeroplane on one flank and the kitchen utensil on the other - have exercised a kind of pincer movement to include many

other things within the spirit of function. In some cases - as in the design of wireless or television sets, the aim seems to be to look functional, rather, perhaps than to be it. The concept of function translates itself into bareness, simplicity, squareness or roundness, solidity, seriousness. Above all, everything is impersonal. The simple furniture, unobtrusive yet tasteful hangings, clean-lined flat irons, innocuous cups and saucers, limpid glass, governess electric clocks, glacial refrigerators, flat-chested cupboards, disinfected panels of linoleum, all suggest the young married couple wearing plastics overalls and washing up together after a wholesome and simple meal of foods which are a harmony of oatmeal and pastel shades, at the end of a day in separate offices which are equipped with electric typewriters.

"There is a lot to admire at The Design Centre, and yet I myself am one of those who would buy every single piece of equipment shown there that goes into the kitchen - indeed would gladly throw away all my existing kitchen furniture and replace it with this - but who would think not once or twice, but a dozen times, before buying anything else, except perhaps a television set (which poses an irresolvable problem solved here in the most harmless way) or an ash tray. . .

"The desire to fuse two quite different concepts - the beautiful and the useful - within the same object has gone out of our civilisation. It is for this reason that we pretend that the useful is the beautiful - and hope for the best, leaving it at that. But to say that the functional is beautiful is really sleight of hand, a play on the word beautiful. . .

GENERALISED NEEDS

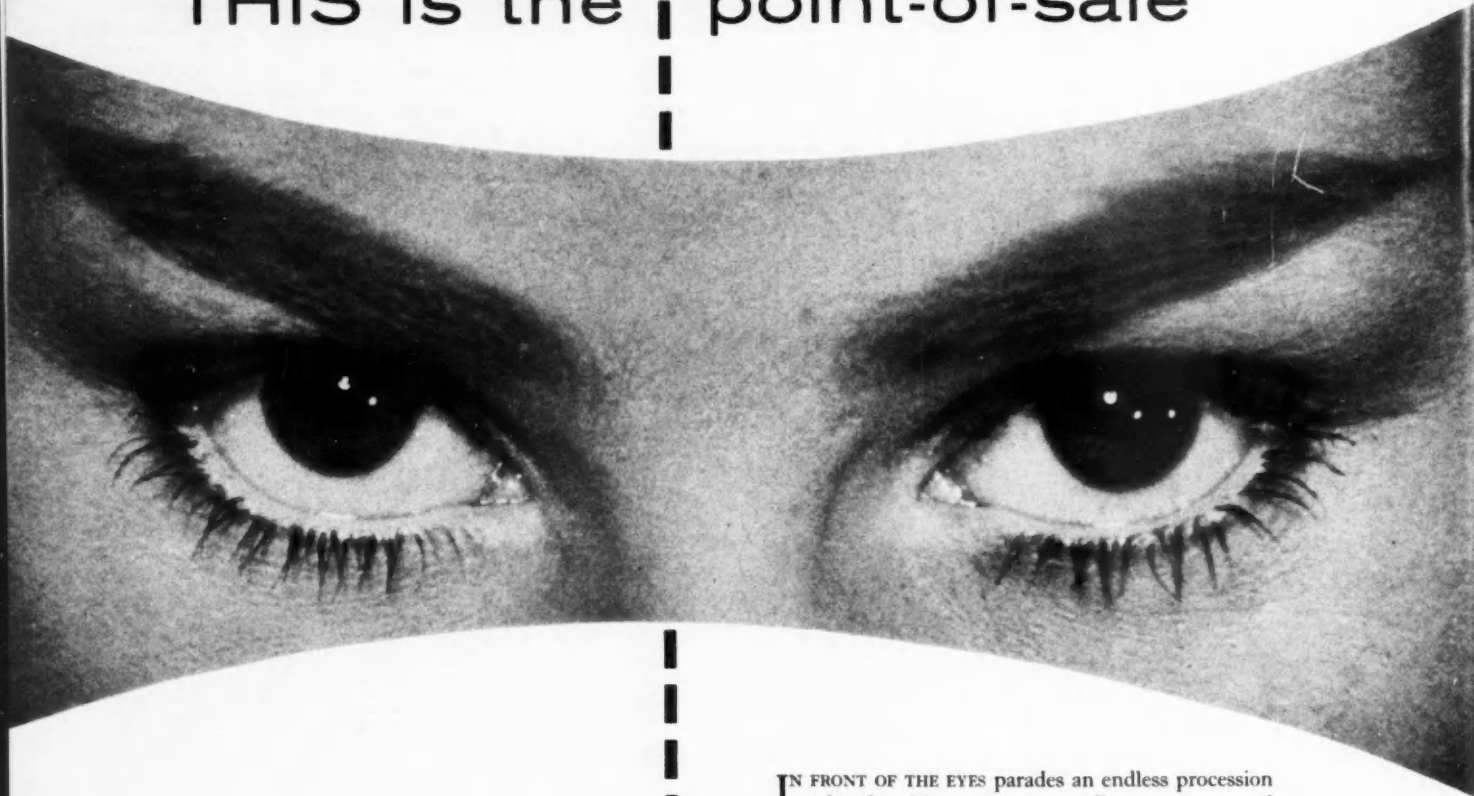
"I think that design has concentrated very much on producing objects which express, tastefully and tactfully, the needs they satisfy. But needs are generalised. A nice cup of tea drunk from a nice cup simply expresses the appetite of thirst which may lead us gently to the appetite of the eye, and give it some nice pleasure. But a chair, or a cup, or a table can do more than this. They can express a much more positive feeling about life. They can be related to a personal taste for Baroque architecture, the clothes we wear, a passion for colour, the excitement of rather eccentric shapes.

"I know the objection to my way of thinking. It is that designers are designing today for socialised welfare state man, leading him gently down the Welwyn Garden City garden path, educating him gently with discourses piped from the Third Programme. None must talk too loud, no-one must flash a light too brightly in his eyes, there must be no violent splashes of colour, he must be anaesthetised with good taste, and who but the British, with the British Council, the Arts Council, the Third Programme, The Design Centre, panethol, chlorophyl, Dettol, know more about disinfectants and anaesthetics?

"There are answers to these questions. One is that the more lively young feel angry and dissatisfied, and perhaps their angry books, their espresso bars, their jazz, their teddy boy clothes, show an underlying sense that bad taste is nearer to the truest inspirations of art - which is life - than officialised good taste.

"A more positive answer is to refer you to the letters and some of the essays of D. H. Lawrence. . . in which . . . [he] . . . applauds those young Florentines who one day years or so ago walked through the streets wearing trousers of which one leg was bright blue, the other scarlet. The idea with which Lawrence would leave us is that although we have socialism and the Welfare State we must fight the concept of the individual as Social Man, a social unit with social needs that have to be catered for in body and spirit. We must think more of people with bodies and souls and less of bundles of conceptualised needs. And when it comes to cups and saucers, pots and pans, weddings and funeral urns, one could think of those Etruscans who decorated all their works with painted figures of dancers and flute players, statuettes of warriors. We must put individual man at the centre of our designing and creating, individual man with individual tastes."

THIS is the point-of-sale



IN FRONT OF THE EYES parades an endless procession of advertising messages. From paper and periodical, large and small screen, poster and point-of-sale . . . hundreds of messages clamouring for attention every day.

Of course, these eyes only register a few of the many attempts to capture attention. And this is where screen printing comes into its own. Screen printing gives the vivid *colour* that catches the eye, the *contrast* that makes your product point-of-sale stand out, the *clearness* that gets the message across. What the eye doesn't see is that screen printing is quicker *and* cheaper.

The original, the superbly produced, the excitingly different . . . these are the advertising messages that compel attention. The kind that Priestleys take pride in producing—the kind that penetrates the point-of-sale and *sells*.

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GPO

miscellany

A new telephone kiosk, 1, designed by Neville Conder, is to be tried out in New Towns and new town centres when development has been carried to the production stage. Before this design was selected the GPO asked 3 designers, Misha Black, Jack Howe and Mr Conder, to submit ideas for a new kiosk. The Postmaster-General chose Mr Conder's design for the experiment, after consultation with the CoID, the Royal Fine Art Commission, and the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland.

The kiosk is intended for manufacture in extruded aluminium sections, with panels of enamelled cast aluminium and toughened $\frac{3}{8}$ inch glass. The notices are neatly fixed to 2 of the bevelled corner sections; the coin box and directories are placed in a telephone desk. There is no traditional backboard, so that all 4 sides of the kiosk can be panelled in glass in open sites.

The roof is in cast aluminium, and the end of each corner extrusion fits rigidly into it, forming a robust frame which is strengthened by the centre and base panels. There is virtually no machining in manufacture. The extrusions are in fact rectangular tubes; those flanking the door carry rain water to the ground from a gutter in the roof frame, and the other 2 contain the wires for the telephone and electric light respectively. Inside the kiosk, the lower halves of these 2 extrusions are fitted with vents which draw in cold air, the rising warm air being expelled through high level vents that are continuous all round the roof. All the vents are also well baffled against weather and contain absorbents which give some measure of sound insulation. The door incorporates a plastics seal and shuts tightly; its prominent handle is cast with the central panel. The kiosk is designed so that several can be fitted side by side, a pvc strip preventing leaves and litter entering the cavities between them. The roof and extrusions are unpainted, and the centre and base panels are painted the traditional GPO red. The cut off corners are faced with a black anodised strip.

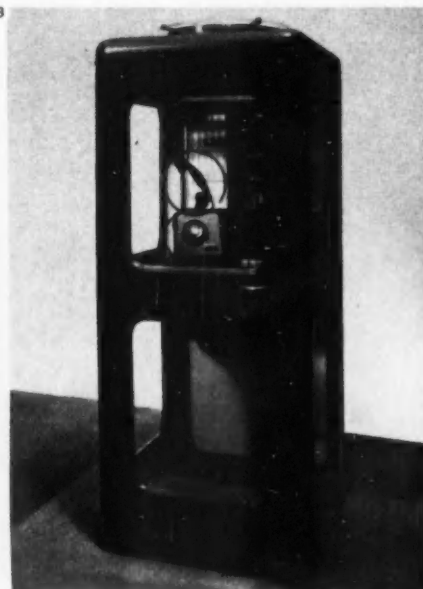
It is estimated that the weight of the production model will be less than half that of the present kiosk. Despite ease of shaping and assembly it will cost rather more to produce, but it will be cheaper to clean and maintain. The GPO does not intend to replace existing kiosks with this new design. It will be tried out in selected areas to test public reaction before it is accepted for full scale production.

The framework of Mr Howe's design, 2, is of anodised aluminium; the lower panels are of obscured toughened glass and the back wall is a fibreglass panel. Mr Black's kiosk, 3, has a carcass of cast aluminium with glass panels on 3 sides.

All 3 kiosks were designed to take the new trunk dialling coin box. This is made by Associated Automation Ltd, and designed in conjunction with the GPO, Douglas Scott being responsible for the external features. Compared with the box it replaces, this aluminium casing, finished in grey, is extremely compact, being little more than 2 ft high and 8½ inches wide.

The illustrations show ½-size models; Mr Conder's design was made by Thurloe Models.

JOHN GRAY





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TC13 ARMCHAIR



TC52
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CHAIR

NEW MODELS IN THE RANGE OF

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TS2 STOOL



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A comprehensive and colourful catalogue illustrates and describes the recently extended range of PEL Taper Tube furniture. PEL will gladly send you a copy on request.

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TC42 SETTEE

TC41 EASY CHAIR



TBW16A

NEWS

CoID

Anglo-Dutch co-operation

On February 13 the CoID's first large retail promotion on the Continent begins. In association with MV Magazijn de Bijenkorf, the Dutch group of department stores, displays of well designed British goods, selected from 'Design Index', will be held for about 3 weeks in the group's 3 stores - in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague.

Departmental buyers and display managers from



Dr B. Kaufmann,
general merchandising
manager, de Bijenkorf



B. Premela,
display manager



A. A. van Nierop,
furniture buyer

de Bijenkorf recently visited The Design Centre and made a selection of goods likely to appeal to the Dutch shopper. They then had discussions with the manufacturers concerned and placed orders which will be taken into stock. Since the war the number of British goods imported by de Bijenkorf has been comparatively low, particularly when compared with imports from Scandinavia and Germany. However, the representatives of the group found a great deal to interest them in the Centre and the correspondence between the kind of goods on view there and those already stocked by de Bijenkorf strengthened their belief that the exhibits would have a definite trade value.

Each of the 3 stores has taken into stock the same selection of goods, but the number actually placed in the exhibitions proper will vary in relation to the amount of display space there is available. For instance, in the Amsterdam store the display will be in a rect-

angular area of some 2,000 sq ft; in The Hague the store's display is in some 3,000 sq ft on the third floor. In Rotterdam the display is in the glass exhibition pavilion at the rear of the recently completed building by Marcel Breuer and A. Elzas (DESIGN September 1957) and will occupy an area of about 1,800 sq ft. The Rotterdam store, which replaced the earlier one by W. M. Dudok which was destroyed during the war, is one of the most modern stores in Europe and a most suitable context for modern design.



A view of part of the furniture department of the Amsterdam de Bijenkorf.

PEOPLE

New Year Honours

In the New Year Honours the following awards were made to people connected with or who have had an influence on British design:

BARON; Sir William Rooses, chairman, Dollar Exports Council.

COMPANION OF HONOUR; Sir Kenneth Clark, chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain.

GCMG; Sir Frank Lee, permanent secretary, Board of Trade.

CMG; Cecil Cooke, director of exhibition division, COI, for services in connection with the British Government Pavilion, *Brussels International Exhibition*.

GBE; Sir John Balfour, Commissioner-General for the United Kingdom, *Brussels International Exhibition*.

CBE; Uffa Fox, yacht designer, for services to yachting. James Gardner, for services in connection with the British Government Pavilion, *Brussels International Exhibition*.

Victor Pasmore, master of painting, Durham University.

Edward D. Mills, for services in connection with the British Industries Pavilion, *Brussels, International Exhibition*.

J. M. Richards, joint editor, *The Architectural Review*, member of the CoID.

OBE; John Lansdell, interior designer British Industries Pavilion, *Brussels International Exhibition*.

MBE; Tom Gourdie, calligraphist, assistant art master, Kirkcaldy High School.

Departure

L. A. Grosbard, CoID industrial officer for the engineering industries, recently left the Council. He has taken up a new appointment with Reynolds (TI) Aluminium Ltd.

Elected

Donald L. McFarland, Manager of Industrial Design, Housewares & Radio Receiver Division, General Electric Company, USA, has been elected president of the American Society of Industrial Designers for the year 1958-59.

Appointment

James Cleveland Belle, the first director of the Cotton Board Colour, Design & Style Centre, and past member of the CoID, has been elected to the board of directors of the advertising agency Colman, Prentis & Varley Ltd.

COMPETITIONS

Plastics prize

A prize of 50 guineas will be given by the British Plastics Federation in its *Worshipful Company of Horners Award* 1958. The competition, for the design of an article suitable for moulding or fabricating wholly or mainly from plastics, is open to anyone resident in Great Britain and Northern Ireland not over 30 years of age on May 25 1959. Closing date May 29; details from British Plastics Federation, 47 Piccadilly, London W1.

Travel

Cranbrook Academy of Art, Michigan, is offering 5 awards of \$1,000 covering tuition fees and a portion of fees for board and room at the academy in memory of George Gough Booth and Ellen Scripps Booth, the academy's founders, Eliel Saarinen its first head, and James Scripps Booth and Michael A. Gorman, trustees. In addition 3 tuition scholarships of \$600 are offered in memory of Carl Milles, sculptor, Gustavus D. Pope and Cecil Billington, trustees. These and other partial tuition grants are available to students for advanced study in the following subjects: architecture, ceramics, design, metal work, painting, sculpture, weaving and textile design. Details from the Registrar, Cranbrook Academy of Art, Lone Pine Road, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, USA. Applications will not be received after March 1.

REPORTS & CONFERENCES

Ergonomics and railway accidents

An ergonomic investigation into the causes of human error is to be started by the British Transport Commission. This is proposed in the latest report on railway accidents¹ as a means of reducing the apparently unaccountable failures of some drivers to see signals. The Medical Research Council has been approached for help in manning a panel of experts from the human sciences. It is to be hoped that those who have brought about this change of policy were helped by the article *Accidents and human error* (DESIGN July 1958), in which the ergonomic approach to railway accidents was favourably compared with the older method of relying on discipline and exhortations to avoid mistakes. The appeals for better behaviour with which chief inspecting officers of former years have ended their reports are absent this year.

¹ *Accidents which occurred on the railways of Great Britain, 1957 HMSO*

continued on page 69



Race seating, now specified by many universities, is here shown in the new Medical School, University of Liverpool (architects: Weightman & Bullen)

lecture theatre seating

Race lecture theatre seating provides a series of components from which rows of any length can be economically shipped and assembled on site. It is adaptable to any step height or for fixing to a flat floor, the length of backrest varying proportionately to accommodate a writing shelf at the correct height for the row behind. Seats have a simple gravity self-tipping action and are covered in a heavy quality P.V.C. coated fabric; steel uprights are stove-enamelled; writing shelves and pre-formed plywood backrests (upholstered if preferred) are of lacquered mahogany.

For further details write or telephone:

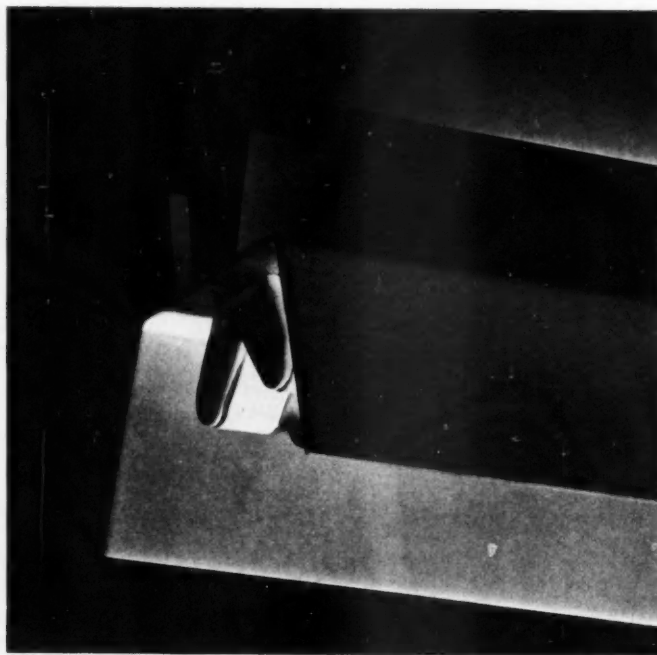
RACE FURNITURE limited

Sentinel House Union Road Clapham SW4 MACaulay 2215/7

One of a series of Fluorescent Fittings priced from £6 1s. 4d., which have been styled by Noël Villeneuve for commercial and industrial uses.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- Two colour stove enamel finish
- Slim basic channel for low ceilings
- Moulded lampholders for 4 ft. and 5 ft. Bi-pin lamps to give clean terminations and easy lamping



A batten fitting finished in two colours with open ended perspex reflector for single or twin 4 ft. or 5 ft. lamps.

Brochure series 303

ALLOM

HEFFER

AND COMPANY LIMITED 17 MONTPELIER STREET, KNIGHTSBRIDGE, LONDON S.W.7: KNIGHTSBRIDGE 6897-8

The number of accidents attributed to human error has dropped this year after having increased steadily over the past 5 years. But that is no guarantee that there is not a much larger and possibly still increasing number of unrecorded human errors that by good fortune do not cause accidents. In 7 out of the 11 train accidents which were the subject of inquiries the drivers were found out to have ignored signals at caution or danger. In one of these cases (Welwyn Garden City, January 7), a particular signal was passed at caution by 2 drivers who afterwards were both certain that it had been at clear. These errors seem to be examples of the very human inability to modify an expected and familiar sequence of actions on the presentation of an unexpected signal to the contrary. It will be interesting to see what means of overcoming this difficulty will be suggested by the ergonomic investigation. One solution, suggested in a paper in the current number of *Ergonomics*,¹ is to increase greatly the strength duration or insistence of signals which are contrary to drivers' expectations.

1 D. Russell Davis, 1958 *Human errors and transport accidents*, *Ergonomics*, November 1958, Taylor & Francis, £1 5s

Hardware prizes

The ICI Plastics Division's *Alkathene Design Prize* has been awarded to Ekco Plastics Ltd for a toilet seat and cover. Second and third places were taken by Jury Holloware Ltd for a laundry basket and Poplar Playthings Ltd for a toy field gun, respectively. The judges of the competition were J. V. Crossley, ICI Plastics Division; Paul Reilly, deputy director, ColD; G. E. Mercer, deputy secretary of the RSA; Ronald E. Brookes, director of design, Brookes and Adams Ltd; and V. F. Mitchell, ICI Plastics Division. Presentation of the trophy will be made on the eve of the *Hardware Trades Exhibition*, February 2.

Teamwork

Even before looking at the handout announcing the results of the *London Master Printers' Association Inter-District Printing Competition 1958* it was evident from a glance at all the exhibits where the merit lay. Well designed print stands out from the mediocre because good design is an integral part of the production of a piece of fine printing. Just as a designer's work can be ruined by bad reproduction, by the block-maker and printer, so much hard work and technical skill of the printer is of little worth without the complement of good design. It is as a result of teamwork that the East and North East Alliance has for the second time won first place in the competition.

In the rules of the competition it is good to see that "fitness for purpose and quality of design" is the first point mentioned for which merits are awarded, but it is difficult to see why the 2 things are separate, as fitness for purpose is an essential quality of good design.

BETTY DOUGHERTY

Lit (Trade)

The Lead Development Association won a certificate of exceptional merit in the *RIBA Manufacturers' Trade and Technical Literature Competition 1958*. The following organisations won certificates of merit, Bartrev Board Co Ltd, British Werno Ltd, Dryad Metal Works Ltd, Falk Stadelmann & Co Ltd, Ferodo Ltd, Gyproc Products Ltd, Holoplast Ltd, Jones & Attwood Ltd, Limestone & Green Slate

Co (Westmorland) Ltd, Redland Tiles Ltd, Troughton & Young (Lighting) Ltd, and Moor Quarry Association.

EXHIBITIONS

Cloths on display

An exhibition, *Cloth Fair*, opened at the Scottish Design Centre in Glasgow last month until March 21, is devoted entirely to dress, furnishing and household textiles. The Scottish Woollen Publicity Council is exhibiting some 70 cloths, the Scottish Wool Manufacturers about 100 examples of linen, cotton, silk, rayon and mixture cloths. Among the furnishing textiles, in addition to curtain and upholstery materials and some carpets, there are a number of exhibits from Scottish lace manufacturers.

Atoms for prestige

The fifth *Atomfair* will be held in conjunction with a Nuclear Congress from April 5-10 at the Public Auditorium, Cleveland, Ohio, USA. It is stated that the fair is such a means of establishing contact with leaders in the industry and related fields that no major US firm in the nuclear field could afford not to participate. It is also, states the Board of Trade, "an event worthy of consideration in connection with any plans that UK manufacturers may have to introduce equipment in the nuclear field to US industry."

UK firms interested in the fair should contact the International Atomic Exposition, 117 South 17 Street, Philadelphia 3, USA.

Danish designs

An exhibition of architecture, furniture, textiles, lighting fittings, tableware and other work by the Danish architect and designer Arne Jacobsen will be held at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, W1, from Feb 26 - March 25. The exhibition will be open Mondays - Fridays 10 am - 7 pm, Saturdays 10 am - 5 pm.

MISCELLANEOUS

Opening time

Whitbread & Co Ltd, have recently opened in Leicester Square, London, a new 4-tier public house, *The Samuel Whitbread*. The twin keynotes, opulence and richness, were repeatedly stressed by the designers, Richard Lonsdale-Hands Associates.

Revamped

Recently Frank A. Mercer and Kathleen Frost retired from active participation in the management of the affairs of The Studio Ltd. In 1926 they started *Commercial art* which later became *Art & industry*.

Last month a new and enlarged version of *Art & industry* called *Design for industry* appeared for the first time.

Awards

The Milanese architect Franco Albini has been awarded the *National Compasso d'oro* in the fifth year of the *Premio la Rinascente Composto d'oro* awarded by the Italian department store La Rinascente. The international award has been made to Den Permanente, the Copenhagen design exhibit.

Changes

Acro Marketing Ltd, designers and manufacturers of advertising and display material has moved from 9 Warwick Court, WC1, to Acro House, 10-12 Emerald Street, WC1; telephone CHANCERY 5654-5 is unchanged.

The address of the London district office of The British Thomson-Houston Co Ltd is now 33 Grosvenor Place, SW1; BELGRAVIA 7011.

LETTERS to the Editor

Taking the credit

Many readers commented on the article *Who should take the credit for designing?* in our November issue. A selection of the letters received is printed below.

SIR: The case for and against crediting the designer for a product is very well put by giving both views in *Who should take the credit for designing?* (DESIGN November 1958 pages 22-23). Both Mr Left (page 22) and Mr Right (page 23) are giving no clues or points, as both are too clearly convinced of what they write: Mr Left, out of distrust, says no and Mr Right, out of his belief that it should be done, says yes. As there are only views and no facts, let us see and consider what they write.

Mr Left, stating that so many men of the engineering group ought to be credited for their work, forgets that the manufacturer put his name on the product and that, when he is consulting a designer, he confesses that he could not do the job himself and has no rights therefore to sell only under his own name.

Mr Left, in saying that the aesthetic quality is not a necessary vital part, shows his ignorance of competitive business possibilities.

Mr Left, in claiming that it is the teamwork of which the product is the outcome, omits considering that teamwork on such an idealistic base is a non-existing and impossible thing and that, on the contrary, a factory team out of conventionalism and out of jealousy is always trying to corner the designer with the dogmatic "It can't be done". Without fantasy and with no respect for the designer's views, living in ivory towers, those men are from the beginning not inclined to give credit at all.

Mr Left, when referring to an industrial designer as a long haired youth from an art school, will agree with the above in that "giving no credit" is in his mind even before work is started.

Mr Left, in thinking that the education authorities could solve the problem, tries to put the case in a questionable future. Too clearly he ignores the fact that there are good designers now; he is only hoping that he will not be forced to make use of them, for he would rather not give them credit.

Mr Right refers to the Italian Renaissance and the famous names from that period, forgetting however that those artists did the job alone, delivering one product at a time. They did not plan mass production.

Mr Right mentions, among others, the name of Wedgwood, famous indeed and worldwide known, but far more as a firm than as a designer. He too used the services of other designers, whose names however were given in relation to pattern and sometimes a form. Their job is in no way comparable with that of the real

continued on page 71

For many years now
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LETTERS

industrial designer, who balances aesthetics, function and techniques with commerce and economy.

Mr Right wants to re-instate the designer, but on no other grounds than he existed in former times. If it is true that the designer vanished from the high councils of industry, it was his own fault. If all seeing men want him back, his ability in building up new competition possibilities is the only reason.

Mr Right thinks it a small price to pay, crediting the designer with more than he deserves. This cannot be true for manufacturers who think otherwise. Indeed, the manufacturers and designers boasting their perfect selves are very annoying for those who see or know, that it is only a small matter of styling.

I think the outcome of the debate will be misty, as all matters of faith are when they are discussed. Those who are not convinced of the possibilities to get better results by employing a designer, will always think like Mr Left. Those who believe in high overall standards, will applaud Mr Right.

It could be better, but that is a difficult matter for there are some "if's".

If designers want to personalise, let them do so, only if they are convinced that the product is theirs. If the first ideas are due to the designer's brainwave, if it is his stimulating influences that brought a product into mass production then he has the right to advertise himself, for his name must be known to future clients. And if the manufacturers would only give credit to their designer, if he has really done the job, their trustworthy claims could help others to share their enthusiasm.

P. J. v.d. SCHEER
Willemstraat 8
Den Haag, Holland

What is a team?

SIR: The section *Give credit to the team* (page 22) bases its argument on the case of an exceptionally large firm. It states "The only way of achieving an integrated and balanced design is to make the aesthetic designer a member of the team of scientists, design engineers, draughtsmen, test engineers, packaging engineers and so on..." Surely only companies employing over 2,000 personnel could afford such a galaxy of specialists? Such large companies form but 6 per cent of the total, and it is doubtful whether they produce more than 10 or 15 per cent of the original new designs, tending in most cases to favour well-tried products, often manufacturing under licence from foreign associates.

The more typical case would be the specialist firm employing a few hundred people, including the designer (who might be known as the technical manager, in an engineering firm). The team might be a draughtsman or 2, working under his direct supervision, or he might manage alone, working direct from sketches to prototypes. He would present the management with a tested working prototype of the product. He might consult an outside industrial designer or packaging expert if his normal work is remote from these fields, but not necessarily so. His job is design and technical work, and he can get on with it while his counterpart in the monster company is bogged down in committee with the team of specialists.

It is not intended to belittle the work of the large companies, since there are products which could be evolved only with expensive research facilities and a great deal of tedious work by competent plodders. But even in the case of the very largest firms, the element of

originality in design is usually clearly the work of 1 or 2 persons. There is no undue difficulty in naming the inventors in a patent application, even when the omission of a co-inventor's name could lead to the rejection of the patent. I have yet to see the design team credited with a patent!

I cannot help thinking that some of the true reasons why firms fail to mention their designers' names are as follows:

1 The product is either manufactured under licence from another company, or is a stock design manufactured by a lesser known company, with nameplate and colour scheme to order.

2 An unknown designer, who cannot show proof of his ability in the form of credited designs, is less likely to receive offers from competitors and foreign firms.

3 The product has not been designed in the true sense at all but is a mediocre re-hash of popular features from competitors' models, compiled by draughtsmen who are not permitted to have ideas of their own (not in the firm's time at any rate!).

4 The firm is not very interested in design or designers and cannot be bothered to enquire who was responsible. (The designer probably left the firm before the product went into production.)

However, the most important point regarding credits for designers is that if a mistake is made, or misleading statements are made, or if unauthorised modifications or additions disfigure the product, the designer should have the opportunity of publishing a statement. There appears to be no provision for this in the case of exhibitions.

L. E. WINGFIELD
17 Vicarage Road
Sunbury-on-Thames
Middlesex

Who takes the blame?

SIR: Who should take the credit for designing? The obvious answer to this question is he who also takes the blame.

In many walks of life we find a well established and widely acknowledged method of holding those who lead responsible. It is so with armies and generals, crews and captains, staffs and directors, orchestras and conductors, MPs and PMs.

Unless there are reasons why designers cannot be fitted into this pattern, the question has already been answered in the existing scheme of things. All that remains to be done is to name the designer in industry as we are wont to name the architect in building.

W. E. WALTERS
General Secretary
The Institute of Engineering Designers
38 Portland Place, W1

Where's the leader?

SIR: The real question to be answered is "Is it possible to credit the complete design to one man or is it a committee design?" Despite your editorial comment there is good precedent in the field of engineering for giving credit where it is due. Locomotives have their Gresleys and aircraft their de Havillands. However, credits may be conditioned by the journal in which they appear; a man responsible for the appearance of a new electronically controlled machine tool may be mentioned in *DESIGN*. Readers of the Electrical Review will be more interested in who designed the electrical circuit.

A design may be the result of teamwork but even a team needs a leader and it should be this man's ultimate responsibility to accept, question, reject or co-ordinate the advice of his colleagues, whether it is on matters of high engineering or just the appearance. Any credit (or blame) for the final design should be his.

Of course, the implication that there is no leader, in the plea to give credit to the team, may be true. This may be the real fault in many cases which is partially remedied by the introduction of an outsider, ostensibly concerned only with appearance.

RICHARD STEVENS
38 Beverley Road
Whyteleafe, Surrey

Why teamwork?

SIR: The debaters in *Who should take the credit for designing?* overlook the essential difference between the industrial designer and his equal partners in the design team. The engineer knows only 2 answers to his design problem, the right and the wrong, but the industrial design solution may equally well be executed in a variety of ways, depending upon the aesthetic experience of the designer concerned.

The choice of designer whether consultant or staff is made by the managing director, selecting the individual considered most likely to satisfy the market and supplement his own manufacturing policy. It is inevitable that his final choice of a designer of executive status is influenced more by the designer's past record of successful products than by his paper qualifications.

The CoID is now sufficiently established to assist by making the condition that no product is illustrated or exhibited without credit being made to the responsible member of the design team whether he be draughtsman, managing director or industrial designer. It is most unlikely that a manufacturer would fail to make application for a provisional patent due to his inability to name the individual concerned; why then insist that visual co-ordination is teamwork? There could be little objection from the designer's engineer colleagues if the use of his name was restricted to those magazines and exhibitions which deal primarily with the appearance of the product.

ROY F. PERKINS
310 Treger House
Abercorn Street
Bulawayo, S. Rhodesia

Press criticism

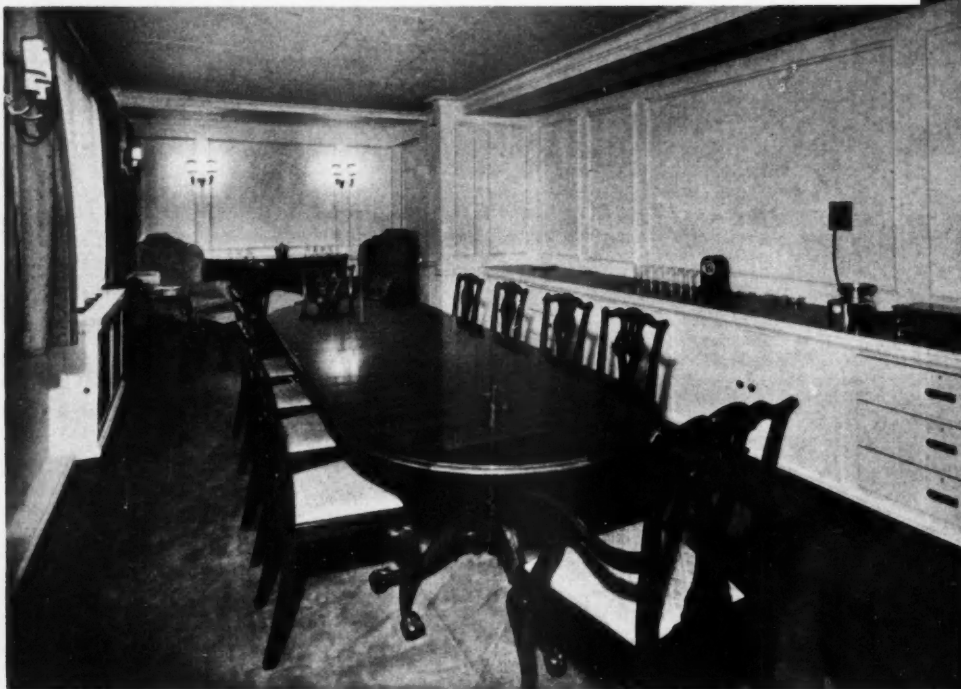
SIR: I left the Birmingham conference on engineering and design (pages 46-49) with the impression that appearance design of machines was not the aspect that commanded the greatest interest of the meeting as a whole.

I also read the article *Inclinable presses* (*DESIGN* November 1958 pages 24-28) and feel that it was written to too narrow a brief, chosen for an argument which appears to one engaged in the business to be a matter of choice in policy. It also omitted any clue to the principles which ought to support a technical approach to appearance design.

For instance, none of the illustrations shows presses with operators' guards, which are compulsory under the Factory Acts, and could well be a starting point of external design. It is as useless to say that guards spoil

continued on page 73

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LETTERS

the lines of a press as to show illustrations of incomplete machines – which is what they are in this country.

Both the approach and the acceptance of appearance design vary between extremes; anyone is as free to justify an illogical preference by praising a design 60 years old as "rugged and workmanlike", as he is to demand a "modern" colour which looks wonderful in a catalogue but disgustingly shoddy after 2 days of normal contact with spanners and oil. But why does the article arbitrate between say the 2 German illustrations?

Consideration for your space alone prevents me extending my criticisms. A subject worth pursuing is worth a better-laid foundation.

H. D. CHALLENGE

Director

Taylor & Challen Ltd

Derwent Works

Birmingham 9

Awkward by what standard?

SIR: In his comments on the appearance of Creed's equipment (DESIGN August 1958 page 43), Peter E. M. Sharp appears to find some significance in the fact that the firm is the sole manufacturer of teleprinters in the United Kingdom.

It should be pointed out, however, that the firm's output today is almost equally divided between home and export markets and, despite the most intense competition from several foreign makers, its equipment enjoys a level of international acceptance unrivalled in the industry.

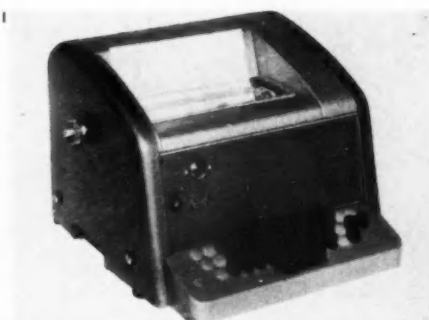
It goes without saying that this competitive export background is a valuable corrective to any tendency toward the monopolistic attitude which might otherwise arise from our dominant home market position, and the importance of appearance design has not entirely escaped us in this connection.

One must remember, also, that it is only within the last 4 or 5 years that teleprinters have really extended into the business and industrial field where design is a sales factor, as distinct from their original and, until recently, primary application in the service of telegraph administrations and the press.

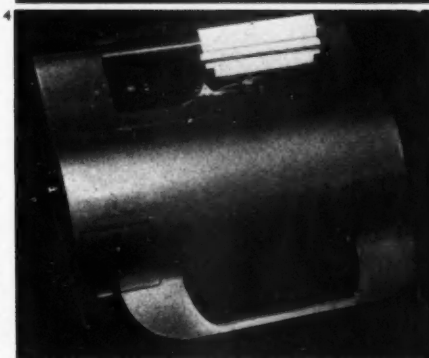
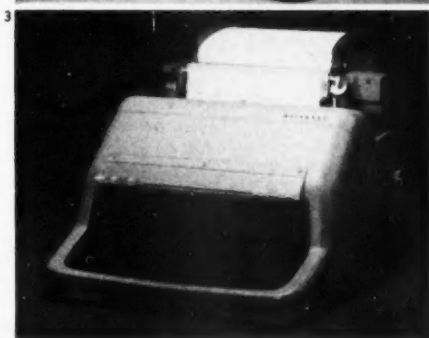
In designing our new teleprinter effort has admittedly been concentrated on perfecting the radically new technical concepts involved, which have resulted in a machine only half the size and a third the weight of previous models, yet able to operate 50 per cent faster, with greatly reduced maintenance.

On the question of external appearance reference is made to its "awkward shape". Awkward by what yardstick? One must surely compare like with like and we feel that our new machine compares favourably in form and finish with any other teleprinter in current production, as will be evident from the illustrations of the latest foreign designs, all of which, by the way, are substantially bulkier and heavier than our new model.

Requirements to be considered in the design of a teleprinter cover are surprisingly numerous and often conflicting. To take just one example – the mating of the keyboard with the body or receiver portion of the machine. This might at first sight seem a relatively simple problem, with a solution on the lines of most typewriters, where the keyboard frame is made integral with the cover proper. Unlike typewriters, however, our machines are supplied with either 3- or 4-bank keyboards. (Our competitors, incidentally, mostly



1 Creed & Co Ltd, model 75 (new design); 2 Siemens 100; 3 Olivetti T2-CN; 4 Creed & Co Ltd (old model).



produce only one or the other type.) If minimum size is to be achieved – and this is an important sales feature – such an integral arrangement demands the production of 2 distinct covers, 1 for machines having 3-bank keyboards and another for the 4-bank version, with yet a third cover for receiver-only machines which have no keyboard. Here production economics enter the picture and must be considered in relation to the comparatively small overall quantities involved, since total European production spread over 5 makers barely reaches 15,000 machines annually.

Although customer comment both from home and abroad confirms our opinion that our machine is not only technically in advance and at least the equal of any other appearance-wise, we are not so complacent as to assume that there is no room for improvement, and appreciation of this fact will be reflected as development proceeds.

DAVID BARKER

Publicity Manager

Creed & Company Ltd

Telegraph House, Croydon

Mr Sharp replies: The fourth and fifth paragraphs of David Barker's letter clearly indicate Creed's lack of a continuous design policy. It is apparent from the firm's latest model that appearance has been a secondary matter; whether this stems from the fact that Creed teleprinters are new to the business market, whether the company has a monopoly, or whether they are exported is in this context irrelevant.

The illustrations of a German, 2, and an Italian machine, 3, are shown here with the earlier Creed model, 4, with which they are contemporary – the comparison is clearly drawn. What I find "awkward" on the later model, 1, is the unrelated set of pressings making up the case: this is accentuated by the fact that 3 of these are in a second colour. The carriage knob sticks out awkwardly from the side pressing; the keyboard housing is heavy in appearance and quite unrelated to the rest of the machine; the maker's trade mark is a jagged affair and could hardly have been placed in a worse position. These are furthermore 8 screwheads showing on the front panel alone. While the carriage return control position might well be fixed by some internal technical requirement, it must be extremely difficult to operate, and in that position a small lever or tablet (as organ builders would call it) would be far better. Design is, however, not a matter of bits and pieces, but integration, so clearly lacking in this teleprinter.

Oration

SIR: I listened to and later read Stephen Spender's wise and thoughtful SIA Design Oration (page 63). It was sensible and sensitive, and yet, in its basic message, curiously unreal.

How does one design for "individual man with individual tastes" if the first production run is 100,000? It sounds all very well calling for romance and humanity while cocking a sentimental eye at the non-conforming Teddy Boy, but Mr Spender is, I fear, barking up the craftsman's tree and turning his back on the realities of mass production as though he were William Morris regurgitated.

If chairs and cups and carpets are to be produced in unprecedented quantities, as they must be if the

continued on page 75



ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF
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The Ian Henderson studio always aims at designs which may prove timeless, combined with the unmistakable stamp of craftsmanship. Clients of only six years' standing already appreciate this fact. The selection of furnishing fabrics, carpets and wallpapers, etc., are chosen with the same thought in mind. The 1959 selection is the best from a large number of countries, many suiting the traditional interior.



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LETTERS

primary physical needs of a world population busily doubling itself are to be met, then I think a quiet reticence is called for: the restraint of the universal anonymity of a mathematical rather than a romantic beauty.

These mass produced objects should be accepted as neutral background, as the static props to which colour, paintings, found objects, sculpture, books and the accumulated impedimenta of a lifetime are added to create a home – an environment expressive of an individual human being.

Please, Mr Spender, do not speed us down the path of prettiness, of mass produced objects masquerading as individual, if minor, works of art.

I personally prefer a steel and leather Mies van der Rohe chair to the prettiest confection of any romance-indoctrinated art student. It may be that my tastes are unduly austere, and I willingly admit the need for the decoration of fabrics and china, but not, I beg, with Etruscan flute players. We are painfully and gropingly trying to find an artistic expression and a vocabulary of decoration for our own times. I agree completely with Mr Spender that we are not yet in Great Britain making a very good job of it, but a sentimental slap in the eye blinds rather than illuminates.

MISHA BLACK

DRU

37 Duke Street, W1

Pulling the wool?

SIR: The report by Kenneth J. Robinson on page 59 of *DESIGN* for August 1958 struck a responsive chord. It concerns itself with the clouded and verbose jargon of some American designers. Your frankness in this matter is refreshing to me because the American professional publications reporting on design have never, to my knowledge, exposed this foolishness, but go along with it. Perhaps this is because their editorial content is not prepared by people whose roots are in design but in journalism, and they are as mystified as the designers would have them to be.

As you no doubt know, most American designers are publicity-hungry, and this is one of the tools used to gain the end. It seems to me that if simplicity is the foundation of all good design, it is also the basic requirement of all the arts, including communication. Those who cry to take off the chrome trim on products hang it on to their speech. My hat is off to you and Mr Robinson.

JOSEPH PALMA, JR
412 Thatcher Avenue
River Forest, Illinois, USA

Owing to the restrictions on space the Editor reserves the right to shorten letters.

BOOKS

Tingens Bruk Och Prigel

Gregor Paulsson, Nils Paulsson, Kooperativa Forbundets Bokforlag, Stockholm. Skr 19.50

This book is an intriguing analysis of the effect of possessions on people, and the power they give us to choose between different ways of life.

The caption to the photograph, ABOVE, for instance, reads: "Hall in London, exhibited at H55. The possessions shown here belong to an English gentle-

BOOKS



man: the bowler and umbrella for his trips to the office in the City or to his club in Pall Mall, the crop and riding boots for his fox-hunting expeditions and the clubs for the golf-course. It's obviously an exhibition setting: in reality one would only find the hat and umbrella in the hall of a town flat – the boots and crop belong at the country house and the golf bag at the club house. Only the telephone is out of character in this self-mocking suite on 3 themes. Its white colour is immediately associated with the boudoir, or does it represent the wife's small inroad in this setting of masculine symbolism?"

Professor Paulsson and his son describe the development of the design of everyday things, and the position in Sweden to-day, where a high standard of living and a wide choice of goods open up many different patterns of living and tend to confuse the public about what they really want. The authors maintain that a closer link between consumer and designer, and clearer critical thought on the part of both, should help to guide the public towards more enlightened buying and an improvement in home conditions.

The text is excellently backed up by photographs, and detailed captions describe the relative practical, social and aesthetic values of the items and room settings shown.

Plenty of new and controversial ideas are put forward in this book, and the plea for closer co-operation between makers and users of things is one which should be urgently heeded in this country too.

DOROTHY MEADE

Addenda

DESIGN December

page 75: the price of *Book design and production No 1* was incorrectly quoted as £1 1s. The correct price is £1 10s plus 5s postage.

DESIGN January

page 34: the fire irons shown in the picture of the fireplace are designed and made by Peter Cuddon, 54 Princess Victoria St, Clifton, Bristol 8.

page 51: the *Stackback* chair was made by Geo M. Hammer & Co Ltd, Crown Works, Hermitage Rd, N4.

page 53: the camera by Kennedy Instruments Ltd illustrated was the prototype and not the production version.

page 59: the bodywork for the particular *Atlantean* bus illustrated was made by W. Alexander & Co (Coach-builders) Ltd; Metropolitan Cammell Weymann Ltd, the firm which was credited, also makes bodies for the *Atlantean*.

This month's cover

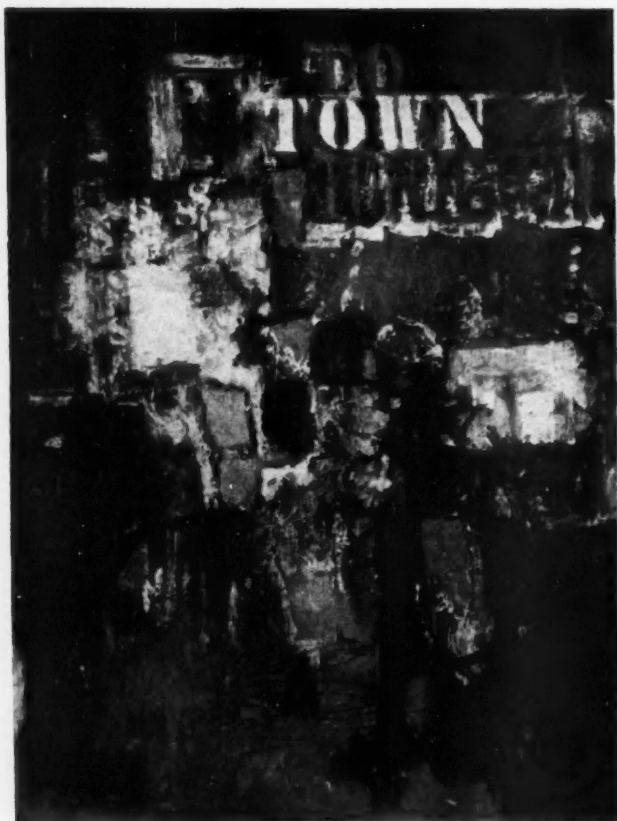
Ian Bradbery, 40, designed this month's cover. Apart from 6 months at the LCC Central School of Arts and Crafts before he joined the army in 1940, Mr Bradbery is self-taught. He has been working as a free lance designer since the war, specialising in exhibitions, interiors and typographical work. He has also designed some furniture. He now teaches part time at the London School of Printing and Graphic Arts, and is consultant for typographical design to Conran Furniture, and consultant for exhibition work to the plastics group of The Distillers Co Ltd.

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The Austin Motor Co Ltd, Longbridge Works, Birmingham 31
W. & T. Avery Ltd, Avery House, Clerkenwell Green, EC1
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Viners Ltd, Bath St, Sheffield 1

DESIGNERS in this issue

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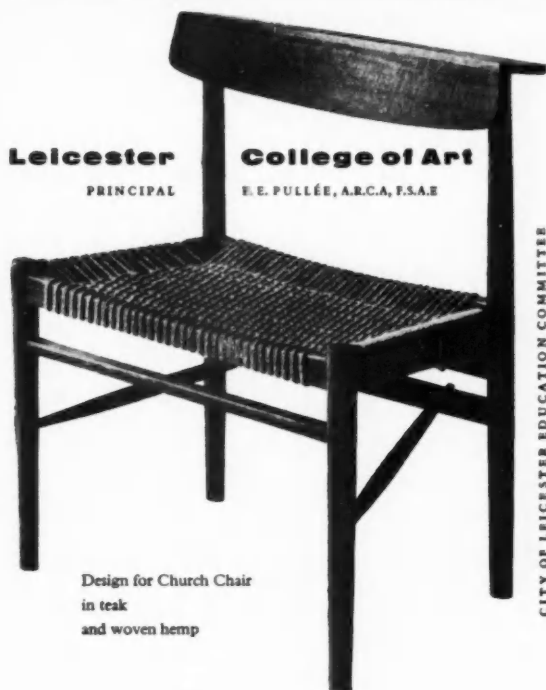
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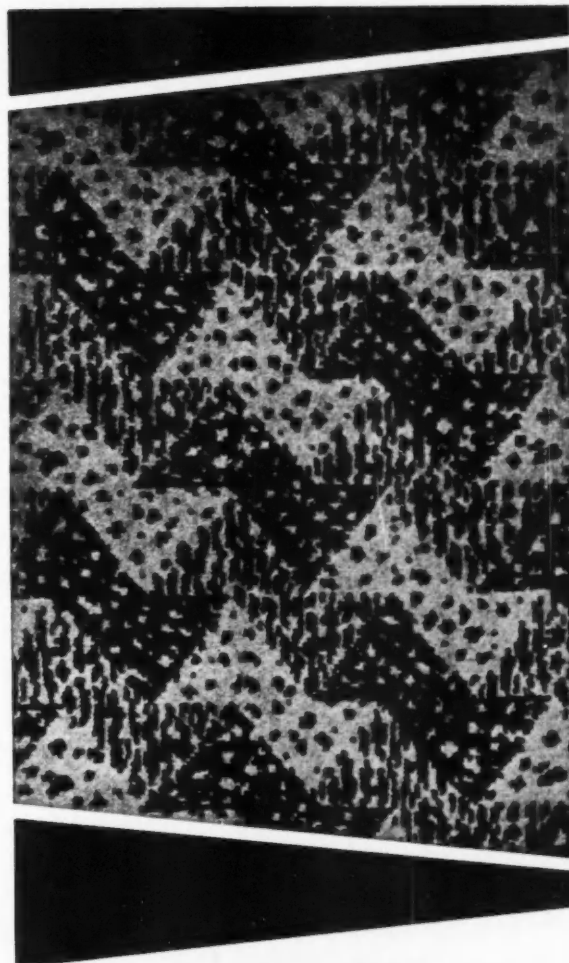
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